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THE

WORKS

OF

JOHN OWEN, D.D.,

EDITED

BY THE REV. WILLIAM H. GOOLD, EDINBURGH,

AND

REV. CHARLES W. QUICK, PHILADELPHIA.

VOL. VIII.

THE DOCTRINE OF THE SAINTS' PERSEVERANCE EXPLAINED AND CONFIRMED.

"GRACE BE WITH ALL THEM WHO LOVE THE LORD JESUS CHRIST IN SINCERITY."—EPH. vi. 24.

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"TAKE HEED UNTO THYSELF, AND UNTO THE DOCTRINE; CONTINUE IN THEM: FOR IN DOING THIS THOU SHALT BOTH SAVE THYSELF, AND THEM THAT HEAR THEE."

1 Timothy, iv. 16.

This edition of the WORKS OF OWEN will consist of seventeen volumes. The first seven volumes will be the same as the corresponding volumes of the London and the Edinburgh edition of the Rev. W. H. Goold, D.D., 1850. The eighth will be identical with the eleventh volume of that edition. The ninth volume will be compiled from the ninth, tenth, and sixteenth volumes of the same edition. Volumes tenth to the sixteenth will contain Owen's exposition of the Epistle of St. Paul to the Hebrews, according to the edition of Dr. Goold. Volume seventeen will contain an index to the whole series taken from Dr. Goold's index as far as applicable, and embracing references to the matter contained in the Exposition of the Epistle to the Hebrews.

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THE

DOCTRINE OF THE

SAINTS PERSEVERANCE

Explained and Confirmed.

OR,

The certain Permanency of their { 1. Acceptation with GOD, & 2. Sanctification from GOD.

MANIFESTED & PROVED

FROM

The { 1. ETERNALL PRINCIPLES, 2. EFFECTUALL CAUSES, 3. EXTERNALL MEANES } Thereof.

IN,

1. THE IMMUTABILITY of the { 1. Nature, 2. Decrees, 3. Covenant, *and* 4. Promises } Of GOD.

2. The { OBLATION and INTERCESSION } Of JESUS CHRIST,

3. The { 1. Promises, 2. Exhortations, 3. Threats } Of the GOSPELL.

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By JOHN OWEN Servant of Jesus Christ in the Worke of the Gospell.

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PREFATORY NOTE.

JOHN GOODWIN, in reply to whom the following large treatise on the Doctrine of the Perseverance of the Saints was written, has been aptly described by Calamy as "a man by himself." An Arminian in creed, an Independent in church-government, and a Republican in politics, "he was against every man, and had almost every man against him." Estranged, by a singular idiosyncrasy of opinions, from all the leading parties of his time, dying in such obscurity that no record of the circumstances in which he left the world has been transmitted, stigmatized with unmerited reproach by the chief historian of his age, and long reputed the very type of extravagance and eccentricity in religion and politics, he has been more recently claimed as the precursor of a most influential religious body, and all honour rendered to him as the Wycliffe of Methodism,—anticipating the theological views of its founder, Wesley, and redeeming them from the charge of novelty. Stronger expressions of respect and praise Goodwin never received from his contemporaries than are to be found in the pages of his antagonist, Owen, who, eulogizing his "worth," his "diligence," and his "great abilities," affirms that "nothing not great, not considerable, not in some way eminent, is by any spoken of him, either consenting with him or dissenting from him."

He was born in Norfolk in 1593, was made a Fellow of Queen's College, Cambridge, in 1617, and in 1633, as the choice of the parishioners, was presented to the vicarage of St Stephen's, Coleman Street, London. He escaped the vengeance of Laud, for some "breach of the canons," by the promise of amendment and submission for the future. He published in 1642 a treatise on justification, entitled "Imputatio Fidei;" in which he maintains that faith, not the righteousness of Christ, "is that which God imputes to a believer for righteousness." Having rendered himself obnoxious to the Presbyterians during their brief supremacy, partly by his doctrinal sentiments, and partly by his literary efforts against them, he lost his vicarage by a decision of the Committee for Plundered Ministers, in 1645; but he appears to have been reinstated in it during the ascendency of Cromwell, whom he had effectually served by some pamphlets justifying the proceedings of the army against the Parliament in 1648: and more especially by a tract entitled "The Obstructors of Justice," in which he defended the High Court of Justice in passing sentence of death against Charles I. On the Restoration, by an order of the House of Commons, proceedings were instituted conjointly against John Milton and John Goodwin, for the same crime of publishing in vindication of the king's death. After a debate of several hours, it was agreed in Parliament that the life of Goodwin should be spared; but as he was declared incapable of holding any office, ecclesiastical, civil, or military, he was again deprived of his vicarage. His death took place in 1665. His private character seems to have been beyond reproach. The odium resting on his memory must be ascribed chiefly to his defence of the execution of Charles I., and to the statements of Bishop Burnet respecting his connection with the Fifth-monarchy Men. On the former point many good men privately held the same opinion as Goodwin; and some, such as Canne and Milton, published in defence of it. When Burnet accuses him of being "thorough-paced in temporal matters" for Cromwell, there might be a colour of truth in the charge: but when he speaks of Goodwin as "heading" the Fifth-monarchy Men, filling all men with the expectation of a millennium, "that it looked like a madness possessing them," and representing kingship as "the great antichrist that hindered Christ being set on his throne;" and when Toplady, improving upon the story, insinuates that Venner, the leader of these fanatics in their insurrection, preached and held his meetings in Goodwin's place of worship, for no reason that we can discover but that Goodwin and Venner seem to have held their meetings in the same street, we are constrained to question both the accu-

racy of the statement as well as the spirit from which it emanated. His enemies, such as Prynne and Edwards, never in all they wrote against him urged such an accusation. In his own writings he affirms the lawfulness of civil magistracy, and of monarchy in particular; and in some of his tracts condemns the excesses of the Fifth-monarchy Men. The specific statements of Burnet, however, cannot well be met by a general charge against him as an inaccurate historian. Mr Macaulay has thrown over the bishop the shield of his high authority, denouncing such a charge as "altogether unjust." Goodwin may have held some millenarian views akin to the notion of a fifth monarchy, while he blames in severe terms the attempt to forestall and introduce it by violence and bloodshed. In one of the passages from his writings, quoted by Professor Jackson, in his able but somewhat impassioned biography of Goodwin, in order to disprove his connection with the Fifth-monarchy Men, there is a sentence which, discriminating the dogma itself from the excesses of its abettors, sustains our conjecture, and we have seen nothing in the other passages inconsistent with it:—"Amongst the persons known by the name of the Fifth-monarchy Men (*not so much from their opinion touching the said monarchy*, as by that fierce and restless spirit which worketh in them to bring it into the world by unhallowed methods), you will learn to speak evil of those that are in dignity," etc. On this supposition, while committed to some premillennial notions, on which the representations of the bishop were founded, Goodwin might be altogether undeserving of the odious imputation which they affix upon his memory.

It was no weak fanatic, therefore, against whom Owen in this instance entered the lists. His work, "Redemption Redeemed," is a monument of literary diligence and ability; and Owen seems almost to envy the copious and powerful diction which enlivens its controversial details. It was his intention to discuss all the points embraced in the Quinquarticular Controversy; but he overtook only two of them in the work now mentioned,—universal redemption, and the perseverance of the saints. The latter topic, occupying about a third part of his work, naturally arose out of the former, when he sought to prove that Christ died for those who ultimately perish, even though for a season they may have been in a state of grace. Owen, in his reply, confines himself to the subject of the perseverance of the saints; first proving the doctrine by general arguments, and then considering its practical effects in the obedience and consolation of the saints, a minute refutation of Goodwin's views being interwoven with both parts of his work. On the subject of universal redemption our author had already given his views to the world in his treatise, "The Death of Death," etc. Long as the following treatise is, however, he intimates his desire to enter still farther on some points in which he was at issue with Goodwin. Though the present work was written while he was burdened with heavy duties as Vice-Chancellor at Oxford, the former part of it is prepared with sufficient care, and relieved with some sprightliness in the composition. The leading fallacy of his opponent, in supposing that the perseverance of the saints implied the continuance of men in gracious privilege though they should become wicked to a degree incompatible with genuine faith, and evincing that they never possessed it, —a fallacy which begs the whole question in dispute,—he compares to "a sturdy beggar," which hath been "often corrected, and sent away grumbling and hungry, and, were it not for pure necessity, would never once be owned any more by its master." The latter part of the work, though able and dexterous in tracking all the sinuosities of the opposing arguments, betrays haste in composition, occasioning unusual difficulty in eliciting, by amended punctuation, the real meaning of many paragraphs and sentences; and the termination is singularly abrupt. He had reserved one of his principal arguments, founded on the oath of God, for the close, as entitled to the "honour of being the last word in the contest;" but concludes without giving it any place in the discussion at all. Perhaps this haste and abruptness are to be explained by the fact that before he had finished this work, the commands of the Council of State were laid upon him to undertake a reply to the Socinian productions of Biddle;—a task which he executed at great length in his "Vindiciæ Evangelicæ." On the whole, however, in regard to the present work, there is no treatise in the language so conclusive and so complete in vindication of the doctrine which it is designed to illustrate and defend.

In the preface a historical account is given of the doctrine from the earliest ages of the church. The confusion alleged to exist in it is not very perplexing, if attention be paid to the "catena patrum,"—the succession of authors to whom he appeals in proof of what the view of the church has been in past ages on the subject of the doctrine under consideration. It is embarrassed, however, by a discussion of the authenticity of the Ignatian Epistles; on which, at the close of the preface, we have appended a note, indicating the present state of the controversy respecting them. The leading

head-lines we have given to each chapter will enable the reader, it is hoped, to follow with greater ease the course of discussion. An exact copy of the original title-page has been prefixed,—the only one in our author's works worth preserving, as curious in itself, and containing his own analysis of the work to which it belongs.

Besides this work of Owen, in reply to Goodwin the following authors appeared:—Dr George Kendall, rector of Blisland, near Bodmin in Cornwall, in two folio volumes, "Theocratia, or a Vindication of the Doctrine commonly received," etc., 1653, and "Sancti Sanciti," etc.; Thomas Lamb, a Baptist minister, in his "Absolute Freedom from Sin by Christ's Death," etc., 1656; Robert Baillie, Principal of Glasgow University, in his "Scotch Antidote against the Englisli Infection of Arminianism," etc., 1656; Richard Resbury, vicar of Oundle, in his "Some Stop to the Gangrene of Arminianism," etc., 1651, whom Goodwin answered in his "Confidence Dismounted," and who again published in reply, "The Lightless Star;" Henry Jeanes, rector of Chedsey, who published "A Vindication of Dr Twisse from the Exceptions of Mr John Goodwin;" and Mr John Pawson, in a sermon under the title of "A Vindication of Free Grace."

In 1658 Goodwin replied to most of these publications in a quarto of five hundred pages, entitled "Triumviri," etc. In regard to the following treatise, "he returns," says Owen, in an epistle dedicatory to his work on the Divine Original of the Scriptures, "a scoffing reply to so much of it as was written in a quarter of an hour."

ANALYSIS.

After a careful definition of the terms employed in the controversy, the statement by Mr Goodwin of the question at issue is objected to, and another proposed as more correct, founded upon a passage in Scripture, Isa. iv. 5. Chap. i.

Five leading arguments are adduced in proof of the perseverance of the saints:—It is argued, 1. From the *divine nature* as immutable; under which head the following passages are considered, Mal. iii. 6; James i. 16–18; Rom. xi. 29; Isa. xl. 27–31, xliv. 1–8. 2. From the *divine purposes* as immutable; and here Scripture is first cited to prove the general immutability of the divine purposes, Isa. xlvi. 9–11; Ps. xxxiii. 9–11, etc.;—and then the special purpose of God to continue his grace to true believers is proved by such passages as Rom. viii. 28; Jer. xxxi. 3; John vi. 37–40; Matt. xxiv. 24; Eph. i. 3–5; 2 Thess. ii. 13, 14. 3. From the *covenant of grace*, the enduring character and the infallible accomplishment of which are proved by the removal of all causes of change by it, the stipulations of Christ as mediator in it, and the faithfulness of God. 4. From the *promises of God*, which are generally described, and, as intimating the perseverance of the saints, proved to be unconditional, the following promises to this effect receiving full elucidation: Josh. i. 5; Heb. xiii. 5; 1 Sam. xii. 22; Ps. lxxxix. 30–37; Hos. ii. 19, 20; John x. 27–29. At this point the consideration of the *oath of God* is deferred, under promise of entering upon it at the close of the discussion;—a promise which the author omits to fulfil. Two interesting digressions follow, affording separate arguments in support of the doctrine;—on the mediation of Christ, as comprehending his oblation and intercession, and on the indwelling of the Spirit. And here the first part of the work concludes. Chap. ii.–ix.

The second part consists in the improvement of the doctrine, by showing how it conduces to the obedience and consolation of the saints, chap. x., and in a refutation of the following arguments of Mr Goodwin in support of the opposite doctrine,—namely, 1. That it is more effectual in promoting godliness; 2. That it does not make God an accepter of persons; 3. That it has been the doctrine of the most pious men in all ages; 4. That it imparts greater power to the exhortations of the gospel; 5. That upon such a principle alone eternal life can be legitimately promised as the reward of perseverance; 6. That it is proved by the sins into which believers undoubtedly fall; 7. That it tends to the consolation of the saints; and, lastly, That it is affirmed in eight passages of Scripture, Ezek. xviii. 24, 25; Matt. xviii. 32–35; 1 Cor. ix. 27; Heb. vi. 4–8, x. 26–29, 38, 39; Matt. xiii. 20, 21; 2 Pet. ii. 18–22. Chap. xi.–xvii.—Ed.

TO

HIS HIGHNESS OLIVER,

LORD-PROTECTOR OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF ENGLAND, SCOTLAND, AND IRELAND, WITH THE DOMINIONS THEREOF.

SIR,

THE wise man tells us that "no man knoweth love or hatred by all that is before him." The great variety wherein God dispenseth outward things in the world, with the many changes and alterations which, according to the counsel of his will, he continually works in the dispensations of them, will not allow them nakedly in themselves to be evidences of the Fountain from whence they flow. Seeing, also, that the *want* or *abundance* of them may equally, by the goodness and wisdom of God, be ordered and cast into a useful subserviency to a good infinitely transcending what is or may be contained in them, there is no necessity that in the distribution of them God should walk according to any constant uniform law of procedure, all the various alterations about them answering one eternal purpose for a determinate end. Of spiritual good things there is another reason and condition; for as they are in themselves fruits, evidences, and pledges, of an eternal, unchangeable love, so the want of them in their whole kind being not capable of a tendency to a greater good than they are, the dispensation of them doth so far answer the eternal Spring and Fountain from whence it floweth as, in respect of its substance and being, not to be obnoxious to any alteration. This is that which in the ensuing treatise is contended for. In the midst of all the changes and mutations which the infinitely wise providence of God doth daily effect in the greater and lesser things of this world, as to the communication of his love in Jesus Christ, and the merciful, gracious distributions of the unsearchable riches of grace, and the hid treasures thereof purchased by his blood, he knows no repentance. Of both these you have had full experience; and though your concernment in the former hath been as eminent as that of any person whatever in these later ages of the world, yet your interest in and acquaintance with the latter is, as of incomparable more importance in itself, so answerably of more value and esteem unto you. A sense of the excellency and sweetness of unchangeable love, emptying itself in the golden oil of distinguishing spiritual mercies, is one letter of that new name which none can read but he that hath it. The series and chain of eminent providences whereby you have been carried on and protected in all the hazardous work of your generation, which your God hath called you unto, is evident to all. Of your preservation by the power of God, through faith, in a course of gospel obedience, upon the account of the immutability of the love and infallibility of the promises of God, which are yea and amen in Jesus Christ, your own soul only is possessed with the experience. Therein is that abiding joy, that secret refreshment, which the world cannot give. That you and all the saints of God may yet enjoy that peace and consolation which is in believing that the eternal love of God is immutable, that he is faithful in his promises, that his covenant,

ratified in the death of his Son, is unchangeable, that the fruits of the purchase of Christ shall be certainly bestowed on all them for whom he died, and that every one who is really interested in these things shall be kept unto salvation, is the aim of my present plea and contest. That I have taken upon me to present my weak endeavours in this cause of God to your Highness is so far forth from my persuasion of your interest in the truth contended for (and than which you have none more excellent or worthy), that without it no other considerations whatever, either of that dignity and power whereunto of God you are called, or of your peculiar regard to that society of men whereof I am an unworthy member, or any other personal respects whatever, could have prevailed with or emboldened me thereunto. "Sancta sanctis." The things I treat of are such as sometimes "none of the princes of this world knew," and as yet few of them are acquainted with. Blessed are they who have their portion in them! When the urgency of your high and important affairs, wherein so many nations are concerned, will lend you so much leisure as to take a view of what is here tendered, the knowledge which you have of me will deliver you from a temptation of charging any weakness you may meet withal upon the doctrine which I assert and maintain; and so that may "run and be glorified," whatever become of the nothing that I have done in the defence thereof, I shall be abundantly satisfied. That is the shield, which being safe, I can with contentment see these papers die. Unto your Highness I have not any thing more to add, nor for you greater thing to pray, than that you may be established in the assurance and sense of that unchangeable love and free acceptance in Christ which I contend for, and that therein you may be preserved, to the glory of God, the advancement of the gospel, and the real advantage of these nations.

Your Highness's most humble and most faithful servant,

JOHN OWEN.

TO THE RIGHT WORSHIPFUL, HIS REVEREND, LEARNED, AND WORTHY FRIENDS AND BRETHREN,

THE HEADS AND GOVERNORS OF THE COLLEGES AND HALLS IN THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD.

Sirs,

The dedication of books to the names of men worthy and of esteem in their generation takes sanctuary in so catholic and ancient prescription, that to use any defensative about my walking in the same path cannot but forfeit the loss of somewhat more than the pains that would be spent therein. Now, although, in addresses of this kind, men usually avail themselves of the occasion to deliver their thoughts as to particulars in great variety, according as their concernments may be, yet the reasons which are generally pleaded as directions for the choice of them to whom, with their labours and writings, they so address themselves, are for the most part uniform, and in their various course transgress not the rules of certain heads from whence they flow. To express a gratitude for respects and favours received, by returning things in their kind eternal for those which are but temporal; to obtain countenance and approbation unto their endeavours, in their breaking forth into the world, from names of more esteem, or at least more known than their own; to advance in repute by a correspondency in judgment with men of such esteem, intimated thereby,—are the more ingenuous aims of men in the dedications of their writings. Though these, and sundry other pretences of the same kind, might justly be drawn into my plea for this address unto you, yet your peculiar designation and appointment, through the good hand of the providence of God, to the defence of the gospel, and your eminent furnishment with abilities from the same hand for the performance of that glorious duty, is that alone upon the account whereof I have satisfied myself, and hope that I may not dissatisfy others, as to this present application. What there is of my own peculiar concernment, wherein I am like to obtain a more favourable condescension in judgment, as to my present undertaking, from you than from other men, will in the close of my address crave leave to have mention made thereof. Brethren! the outward obligations that are upon you from the God of truth, with the advantages which he hath intrusted you withal for the defence of his truth, above the most of men in the world, are evident even to them that walk by the way, and turn little aside to the consideration of things of this nature, importance, and condition; and it is to me an evidence of no small encouragement that God will yet graciously employ you in the work and labour of his gospel, by his constant giving a miscarrying womb to all them who have attempted to defraud the nation and the churches of God therein of those helps and furtherances of piety and literature with whose management for their service you are at present intrusted. Of the jewels of silver and gold whereof, by the Lord's appointment, the children of Israel, coming out from amongst them, spoiled the Egyptians, did they dedicate to the tabernacle in the wilderness, when the Lord "planted the

heavens, and laid the foundations of the earth, and said unto Zion, Thou art my people." Though some outward provisions and furnitures of literature,—now, through the good hand of God, made serviceable to you in your attendance upon the great work and employment committed to you,—were first deposited when thick darkness was over the land, yet that they may be made eminently subservient to the will of God in raising up again the tabernacle of David, that was fallen down, the experience of a few years, I no way doubt, will abundantly reveal and manifest. That in the vicissitude of all things, given them by the mysterious and dreadful wheels of providence, your good things also (as every thing else that is pleasant and desirable, or given of God unto the sons of men, hath done) have fallen into the possession and disposal of men, some enemies, others utterly useless and unfruitful to the Lord in their generations, cannot be denied; but what is there, in his ways or worship, in his works or word, that God hath not, at some season or other, delivered into the power of the men of the world; though they have abused and perverted them to their own destruction? Neither is there any other use of this consideration, but only to inform them of the obligation they lie under to a due and zealous improvement of them to whose trust and care the Lord commits any of his mercies, when he rescues them from the captivity under which they have been detained by ungodly men. This is now your lot and condition in reference to many who, for sundry generations, possessed those places and advantages of eminent service for the house of our God which you now enjoy. What may justly be the expectation of God from you, under this signal dispensation of his goodness; what is the hope, prayer, and expectation of very many that fear him, concerning you in this nation; what are the designs, desires, aims, and endeavours, of all sorts of them who bear ill-will at whatsoever is comely or praiseworthy amongst us,—you are not ignorant. Whatever consideration, at any time or season, may seem to have had an efficacy upon the minds and wills of men under the like sacrament and designment to the service of truth with yourselves, to incite and provoke them to a singularly industrious and faithful discharge of their duty, is eminently pressing upon you also; and you are made a spectacle to men and angels as to the acquitment of yourselves. The whole of your employment, I confess,—both in the general intendment of it, for the promoting and diffusing of light, knowledge, and truth, in every kind whatever, and in the more special design thereof, for the defence, furtherance, and propagation of the ancient, inviolable, unchangeable truth of the gospel of God,—is, in the days wherein we live, exposed to a contention with as much opposition, contempt, scorn, hatred, and reproach, as ever any such undertaking was, in any place in the world wherein men pretended to love light more than darkness.

It is a hellish darkness which the light of the sun cannot expel. There is no ignorance so full of pride, folly, and stubbornness, as that which maintains itself in the midst of plentiful means of light and knowledge. He that is in the dark when the light of the sun is as seven days, hath darkness in his eye; and how great is that darkness! Such is the ignorance you have to contend withal; stubborn, affected, prejudicate, beyond expression; maintaining its darkness at noonday; expressly refusing to attend to the reason of things, as being that alone, in the thoughts of those men (if they may be so called who are possessed with it), wherewith the world is disturbed. From those who, being under the power of this inthralment, do seem to repine at God that they are not beasts, and clamorously traduce the more noble part of that kind and offspring whereof themselves are,—which attempts do heighten and improve the difference between creatures of an intellectual race and them, to whom their perishing composition gives the utmost advancement,—whose eternal seeds and principles are laid by the hand of God in their respective beings, you will not, I am sure, think it much if you

meet with oppositions. Those who are in any measure acquainted with the secret triumphing exaltations of wisdom and knowledge against folly and ignorance, with the principles and conditions wherewith they advance themselves in their gloryings, even then when the precedency of (that which is bestial in this world) force and violence outwardly bears them down with insultation and contempt, will rather envy than pity you in any contest that on this foot of account you can be engaged in. You are not the first that have fought with men after the manner of beasts, nor will be the last who shall need to pray to be delivered from absurd and unreasonable men, seeing "all men have not faith."

Men of profane and atheistical spirits, who are ready to say, "Who is the LORD? What is the Almighty that we should fear him? or his truth that we should regard it?" whose generation is of late multiplied on the face of the earth, crying "A confederacy" with them who, professing better things, are yet filled with grievous indignation at the sacrifice that hath been made of their abominations before their eyes, by that reformation of this place wherein you have been instrumental, are a continual goad on the other side, and would quickly be a sword in your very bowels, were not "He that is higher than the highest" your dwelling-place and refuge in your generation. These are they upon whom God having poured contempt and stained their glory, they, instead of accepting of his dispensations, are filled with wrath, and labour to make others drink of the cup which hath been offered to themselves. With their reproaches, slightings, undervaluations, slanders, do your worth, diligence, integrity, labours, contend from one end of this earth to the other. He that "hath delivered doth deliver; and in him we trust that he will yet deliver."

What other oppositions you do meet, or in your progress may meet withal, I shall not mention; but wait with patience on Him who gives men repentance and change of heart to the acknowledgment of the things that are of Him. This in the midst of all hath hitherto been a cause of great rejoicing, that God hath graciously kept off ravenous wolves from entering into your flocks, where are so many tender lambs, and hath not suffered "men to arise from amongst yourselves speaking perverse things. and drawing away disciples after them;" but as he hath given you to "obey from the heart that form of doctrine which hath been delivered unto you," so he hath preserved that "faith" amongst you "which was once delivered unto the saints."

Your peculiar designation to the service of the gospel and defence of the truth thereof, your abilities for that work, your abiding in it notwithstanding the opposition you meet withal, "in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation," are, as I said before, my encouragements in this address unto you, wherein I shall crave leave a little farther to communicate my thoughts unto you as to the matter in hand. Next to the Son of his love, who is the Truth, the greatest and most eminent gift that God hath bestowed on the sons of men, and communicated to them, is his truth revealed in his word,—the knowledge of him, his mind and will, according to the discovery which he hath made of himself from his own bosom, having magnified his word above all his name. The importance hereof as to the eternal concernments of the sons of men, either in ignorance refusing and resisting, or accepting and embracing of it, is that which is owned, and lies at the bottom and foundation of all that we any way engage ourselves into in this world, wherein we differ from them whose hope perisheth with them. Unto an inquiry after and entertainment of this divine and sacred *depositum* hath God designed the fruit and labour of that wherein we retain the resemblance of him; which, whilst we have our being, nothing can abolish. The mind of man and divine truth are the two most eminent excellencies wherewith the Lord hath adorned this lower part of his creation; which, when they correspond and are brought into conformity with each other, the mind being changed into the image of truth,

there is glory added to glory, and the whole rendered exceeding glorious. By what suitableness and proportion in the things themselves (that is, between truth and the mind of man), as we are men,—by what almighty, secret, and irresistible power, as we are corrupted men, our minds being full of darkness and folly,—this is wrought, is not my business now to discuss. This is on all hands confessed, that. setting aside the consideration of the eternal issues of things, every mistake of divine truth, every opposition to it or rejection of it, or any part of it, is so far a chaining up of the mind under the power of darkness from a progress towards that perfection which it is capable of. It is truth alone that capacitates any soul to give glory to God, or to be truly useful to them who are partakers of flesh and blood with him ; without being some way serviceable to which end, there is nothing short of the fulness of wrath that can be judged so miserable as the life of a man. Easily so much might be delivered on this account as to evince the dread of that judgment whereto some men, in the infallibly wise counsel of God, are doomed, even to the laying out of the labour and travail of their minds, to spend their days and strength in sore labour, in making opposition to this truth of God. Especially is the sadness of this consideration increased in reference to them who, upon any account whatever, do bear forth themselves, and are looked upon by others, as "guides of the blind," as "lights to them which are in darkness," as the "instructors of the foolish," and " teachers of babes." For a man to set himself, or to be set by others, in a way wherein are many turnings and cross paths, some of them leading and tending to places of innumerable troubles, and perhaps death and slaughter, undertaking to be a guide to direct them that travel towards the place of their intendments, where they would be, and where they shall meet with rest; for such an one, I say, to take hold of every one that passeth by, pretending himself to be exceeding skilful in all the windings and turnings of those ways and paths, and to stand there on purpose to give direction, if he shall, with all his skill and rhetoric, divert them out of the path wherein they have perhaps safely set out, and so guide them into those by-ways which will certainly lead them into snares and troubles, if not to death itself,—can he spend his time, labour, and strength, in an employment more to be abhorred? or can he design any thing more desperately mischievous to them whose good and welfare he is bound and promiseth to seek and promote? Is any man's condition under heaven more to be lamented, or is any man's employment more perilous, than such an one's, who, being not only endowed with a mind and understanding capable of the truth and receiving impressions of the will of God, but also with distinguishing abilities and enlargements for the receiving of greater measures of truth than others, and for the more effectual improvement of what he doth so receive, shall labour night and day, dispending the richest treasure and furnishment of his soul for the rooting out, defacing, and destruction of the truth, for the turning men out of the way and paths that lead to rest and peace? I never think of the uncomfortable drudgery which men give up themselves unto, in laying the hay and stubble of their vain and false conceptions upon the foundation, and heaping up the fruit of their souls, to make the fire that consumes them the more fierce and severe, but it forces compassionate thoughts of that sad condition whereto mankind hath cast itself by its apostasy from God. And yet there is not any thing in the world that men more willingly, with more delight and greediness, consecrate the flower of their strength and abilities unto, than this of promoting the delusions of their own minds, in opposition to the truth and ways of God. It is a thing of obvious observation and daily experience, that if, by any means whatever, any one closeth with some new and by-opinion, off from the faith delivered to and received by the generality of the saints, be it a thing of never so small concernment in our walking with God in gospel obedience, and in love without dissimulation one towards another, yet instantly more weight is laid upon it, more pains laid out about

it, and zeal dispended for its supportment and propagation, than about all other most necessary points of Christian religion. Have we not a deplorable cloud of examples of men contending about some circumstance or other in the administration of an ordinance, biting and devouring all that stand in their way, roving up and down to gain proselytes unto their persuasion, and in the meantime utterly ignorant or negligent of the great doctrines and commands of the gospel of Jesus Christ, which are, as in him, the head and life of souls? How many a man seems to have no manner of religion at all, but some one error! That is his God, his Christ, his worship; that he preaches, that he discourseth of, that he labours to propagate, until, by the righteous judgment of God, it comes to pass that such men in all other things wither and die away, all the sap and vigour of their spirits feeding that one monstrous excrescency, which they grow up daily into. Desire of emerging and being notable in the world, esteem and respect in the hearts and mouths of them whom peculiarly they draw after them, with the like unworthy aims of self-advancement, may, without evil surmising (when such attempts are, as in too many, accompanied with irregularity in conversation), be supposed to be advantages given into the hands of the envious man, to make use of them for the sowing of his tares in the field of the poor seduced world.

That this procedure is also furthered by the burdensomeness of sound doctrine unto the generality of men, who, having "itching ears," as far as they care for these things, do spend their time in religion in nothing else but either to tell or to hear some new thing, cannot be denied. Besides, to defend, improve, give and add new light unto, old truths (a work which hath so abundantly and excellently been laboured in by so many worthies of Christ, especially since the Reformation), in any eminent manner, so as to bring praise and repute unto the undertakers (which, whether men will confess or no, it is evident that too many are enslaved unto), is no easy task. And for the most part of what is done that way, you may say, "Quis leget hæc?" The world, says every one, is burdened with discourses of this nature. How many have we in our days who might have gone to the grave in silence among the residue of their brethren, and their names have remained for a season in the voisinage, where they might have done God the service required of them in their generation, would they have kept themselves in the form of wholesome words and sound doctrine, that have now delivered their names into the mouths of all men, by engaging into some singular opinions, though perhaps raked out of the ashes of Popery, Socinianism, or some such fruitful heap of error and false notions of the things of God!

I desire not to judge before the time; the day will manifest all things, and the hidden secrets of the hearts of men shall by it be laid open, when all the ways, causes, and occasions, of their deceiving and being deceived shall be brought to light, and every man according to his work shall have praise of God;—only. I say, as to the present state of things, this is evident (not to speak of those locusts from the bottomless pit that professedly oppose their strength to all that is of God, his name, word, worship, truth, will, and commands, razing the foundation of all hopes for eternity; nor of him and his associates who "exalteth himself above all that is called God," being "full of names of blasphemy," sealed up to destruction), very many amongst ourselves, of whom we hoped better things, do, some in greater, some in lesser matters, give up themselves to that unhappy labour we before mentioned, of opposing the truth of God, and exalting their own darkness in the room of his glorious light.

> "Ut jugulent homines, surgunt de nocte latrones:
> Ut teipsum serves, non expergisceres?"[1]

Reverend brethren, if other men can rise early, go to bed late, and eat the bread of carefulness, spend their lives and strength to do their own work, and

[1] Hor. Ep., lib. i. 2.

propagate their own conceptions, under a pretence of doing the work of God; if the envious man watcheth all night and waits all advantages to sow his tares,—how will you be able to lift up your heads with joy, and behold your Master's face with boldness at his coming, if, having received such eminent abilities, endowments, and furnishments from him for his service, and the service of his sheep and lambs, as you have done, you gird not up the loins of your minds, and lay not out your strength to the uttermost for the weeding out of the field and vineyard of the Lord "every plant which our heavenly Father hath not planted," and for feeding the flock of Christ with sincere milk and strong meat, according as they are able to bear? What you have received more than others is of free grace; which is God's way of dealing with them on whom he lays the most unconquerable and indispensable obligations unto service. Flesh and blood hath not revealed unto you the truth of God which you do profess, but our Father which is in heaven. You do not upon any endeavour of your own differ from them who are given up to the sore judgment and ever-to-be-bewailed condition before mentioned. It hath not been from your own endeavours or watchfulness that you have been hitherto preserved under the hour of temptation, which is come to try the men that live upon the face of the earth. It is not of yourselves that you are not industriously disturbing your own souls and others with this or that intrenchment upon the doctrine of the gospel, and the free grace of God in Jesus Christ; which not a few pride themselves in, with the contempt of all otherwise minded. And doth not the present state of things require the full disbursing of all that you have freely received for the glory of Him from whom you have received it? You are not only persons who, as doctors and teachers in a university, have a large, distinct disciplinary knowledge of divinity, but also such as to whom "the Son of God is come, and hath given an understanding to know him that is true;" "into whose hearts God hath shined, to give the light of the knowledge of his glory in the face of Jesus Christ;" and therefore may say, "'What shall we render to the LORD?' how shall we serve him in any way answerable to the grace we have received?" I speak not this, the Lord knows it, before whom I stand, with reflection on any, as though I judged them neglecters of the duty incumbent on them. "Every one of us must give account of himself to God." The daily pains, labour, and travail, of many of you in the work of the gospel, the diligence and endeavours of others in promoting other useful literature, are known unto all. Only the consideration of my own present undertaking, joined with a sense of mine own insufficiency for this, or any other labour of this kind, and of your larger furnishment with abilities of all sorts, press me to this stirring up of your remembrance to contend for the faith, so much opposed and perverted. Not that I would press for the needless multiplying of books (whose plenty is the general customary complaint of all men versed in them), unless necessity call thereto. "Scribimus indocti, doctique." But that serious thoughts may be continually dwelling in you to lay out yourselves to obviate the spreading of any error whatever, or for the destruction of any already propagated, by such ways and means as the providence of God and the circumstances of the matter itself shall call you out unto, is in the desire of my soul.

Something you will find in this kind attempted by the weakest of your number, in this ensuing treatise The matter of it I know will have your approbation, and that because it hath His whom you serve. For the manner of handling it, it is humbly given up to his grace and mercy, and freely left to your Christian judgment. The general concernments of this business are so known to all that I shall by no means burden you with a repetition of them. The attempt made by Mr Goodwin against the truth here asserted was by all men judged so considerable (especially the truth opposed having a more practical influence into the walking of the saints with God than any other by him assaulted, and the defend-

ing of it giving more advantage unto an inquiry after the mind of God, as delivered in innumerable places of Scripture, than any of the rest opposed) as that a removal of his exceptions to our arguments, and an answer to his objections, were judged necessary by all. Other reasons manifesting this endeavour to be in order and in season, I have farther communicated in the entrance of the treatise itself. In my addresses to the work, I could by no means content myself with a mere discussing of what was produced by my adversary; for he having kept himself, for the most part, within the compass of the synodal writings of the Remonstrants, which are already most clearly and solidly answered (by one especially, renowned Amesius), to have tied myself unto a contest with him had been merely *actum agere*, without promoting the cause I had undertaken in the least. As I account it by no means an ingenuous proceeding for men to bear up their own names by standing upon the shoulders of others, to deport themselves authors when indeed they are but collectors and translators; so I am very remote from being so far in love with this way of handling controversies in divinity, as to think it necessary to multiply books of the same matter, without some considerable addition of light and strength to the cause whose protection and promotion are undertaken. On this consideration, besides incident discourses, which I hope, through the grace of Him that supplied seed to the sower, may be of use and have an increase amongst the saints of God, I have made it my aim (and what therein I have attained is, with all submission of mind and judgment, cast before the thoughts of men whose senses are exercised to discern good and evil) to place each argument insisted on upon its own proper basis and foundation; to resolve every reason and medium whereby I have proceeded into its own principles, discovering the fountain and well-head of all the streams that run in the field of this contest; as also to give some clearings and evidences to our conclusions from the several texts of Scripture discussed, by discovering the reason of them and intent of God in them. Some arguments there are, and sundry texts of Scripture, that are usually produced and urged in the defence of the cause under consideration that I have not insisted on, nor vindicated from the exceptions of the adversaries. Not that I judge them *indefensible* against their most cunning or most furious assaults, and so slighted what I could not hold,—for, indeed, I know not any one text of Scripture commonly used for this end, nor any argument by any sober man framed to the same purpose, that is not capable of an easy and fair vindication,—but merely because they fell not in *regularly* in the method I had proposed to myself, nor would so do, unless I had gone forth to the issue of my first intendment, and had handled the abode of believers with God at large from its principles and causes, as I had done that part of our doctrine which concerns the continuance of the love of God with and unto them; which the growth of the treatise under my hand would not give me leave to do. What hath been, or may yet farther be, done by others who have made or shall make it their business to draw the saw of this controversy to and fro with Mr Goodwin, I hope will give satisfaction, as in other things, so in the particulars by me omitted. As to what I have to speak, or at least think it convenient to speak, concerning him with whom in this discourse I have much to do, and the manner of my dealing with him, being a thing of personal concernment, not having any influencing aspect on the merits of the cause, I shall in not many words absolve you of your trouble in the consideration thereof. My adversary is a person whom his worth, pains, diligence, and opinions, and the contests wherein on their account he hath publicly engaged, have delivered from being the object of any ordinary thoughts or expressions. Nothing not great, not considerable, not some way eminent, is by any spoken of him, either consenting with him or dissenting from him. To interpose my judgment in the crowd, on the one side or the other, I know neither warrant nor sufficient cause; we all stand or fall to our own masters, and the fire

will try all our works. This only I shall crave liberty to say, that whether from his own genius and acrimony of spirit, or from the provocations of others with whom he hath had to do, many of his polemical treatises have been sprinkled with satirical sarcasms, and contemptuous rebukes of the persons with whom he hath had to do; so that were I not relieved in my thoughts by the consideration of those exacerbations and exasperations of spirit which, upon other accounts besides bare difference of opinion in religious things, have fallen out in the days and seasons which have passed over us, all of them labouring to exert something of themselves on every undertaking of the persons brought under their power, I should have been utterly discouraged from any contest of this nature. Much, indeed, of his irregularity in this kind I cannot but ascribe to that prompt facility he hath in putting abroad every passion of his mind and all his conceptions, not only decently clothed, with language of a full and choice significancy, but also trimmed and adorned with all manner of signal improvements that may render it keen or pleasant, according to his intendment or desire. What the Latin lyric said of the Grecian poets may be applied to him:—

"Monte decurrens velut amnis, imbres
Quem super notas aluêre ripas,
Fervet, immensusque ruit profundo
Pindarus ore."[1]

And he is hereby plainly possessed of not a few advantages. It is true that when the proof of his opinion by argument, and the orderly pursuit of it, is incumbent on him (a course of all others wherein he soonest faileth), the medium he useth and insisteth on receiveth not the least contribution of real strength from any dress of words and expressions wherewith it is adorned and accompanied; yet it cannot be denied but that his allegorical amplifications, illustrations, and exaggerations of the things he would insinuate, take great impressions upon the minds of them who are in any measure entangled with the seeming probabilities which are painted over his arguments, by their sophistry and pretence of truth. The apostle, giving that caution to the Colossians, that they should take heed μή τις αὐτοὺς παραλογίζηται ἐν πιθανολογίᾳ, manifesteth the prevalency of false reasonings when in conjunction with rhetorical persuasion, Col. ii. 4. The great store also of words and expressions, which for all occasions he hath lying by him, are of no little use to him, when, being pressed with any arguments or testimonies of Scripture, and being not able to evade, he is forced to raise a cloud of them, wherewith after he hath a while darkened the wisdom and counsel of that wherewith he hath to do, he insensibly slips out of the cord wherewith he appeared to have been detained, and triumphs as in a perfect conquest, when only an unarticulate sound hath been given by his trumpet, but the charge of his adversaries not once received or repelled. But not anywhere doth he more industriously hoist up and spread the sails of his luxuriant eloquence than when he aims to render the opinion of his adversaries to be "monstrum horrendum, informe ingens, cui lumen ademptum," —a dark, dismal, uncomfortable, fruitless, death-procuring doctrine, such as it is marvellous that ever any poor soul should embrace or choose for a companion or guide in its pilgrimage towards heaven. Rolling through this field, his expressions swell over all bounds and limits; metaphors, similitudes, parables, all help on the current, though the streams of it being shallow and wide, a little opposition easily turns it for the most part aside; a noise it makes, indeed, with a goodly show and appearance.

"—— Agylleus
Herculeâ non mole minor,——
Sed non ille rigor, patriumque in corpore robur.
Luxuriant artus, effusaque sanguine laxo
Membra natant."——[Stat. Theb., vi. 837-842, slightly altered.]

[1] Hor. Od., lib. iv. 2.

This, as I said, prompts, I fear, the learned person of whom we speak to deal so harshly with some of them with whom he hath to do. And it is still feared that

> "Parata tollit cornua;
> Qualis Lycambæ spretus infido gener,
> Aut acer hostis Bupalo." [1]

It might, indeed, be the more excusable if evident provocation were always ready at hand to be charged with the blame of this procedure, if he said only,

> "An, si quis atro dente me petiverit,
> Inultus ut flebo puer." [2]

But for a man to warm himself by casting about his own pen until it be so filled with indignation and scorn as to blur every page and almost every line, is a course that will never promote the praise nor adorn the truth of God. For what remains concerning him, "Do illi ingenium, do eloquentiam et industriam; fidem et veritatem utinam coluisset."

The course and condition of my procedure with him, whether it be such as becometh Christian modesty and sobriety, with an allowance of those ingredients of zeal in contending for the truth which in such cases the Holy Ghost gives a command for, is referred to the judgment of all who are concerned, and account themselves so, in the things of God. As to any bitterness of expression, personal reflections, by application of satirical invectives, I know nothing by myself; and yet I dare not account that I am hereby justified. The calm and indifferent reader, not sensible of those commotions which the discovery of sophistical evasions, pressing of inconsequent consequences, bold assertions, etc., will sometimes raise in the most candid and ingenuous mind, may (and especially if he be an observer of failings in that kind) espy once and again some signs and appearances of such exasperations as ought to have been allayed with a spirit of meekness before the thoughts that stirred them up had been turned out of doors in the expressions observed. Although I am not conscious of the delivery of myself in any terms intimating a captivity under the power of such a snare for a moment, yet what shall to the Christian reader occur of such a seeming tendency I humbly refer it to his judgment, being content to suffer loss in any hay or stubble whatever that I may have laid upon the foundation of truth, which I am sure is firmly fixed by God himself in the business in hand.

For what farther concerns my manner of dealing in this argument, I have only a few things to mention, reverend brethren, and you will be discharged of the trouble of this prefatory address unto you. The matter in hand, I hope, you will find attended and pursued without either jocular or historical diversions, which are judged meet by some to retain the spirits and entice the minds of the readers, which are apt to faint and grow weary if always bent to the consideration of things weighty and serious. With you, who are continually exercised with severer thoughts and studies than the most of men can immix themselves withal, such a condescension to the vanity of men's minds and lightness of their spirits I am sure can find no approbation. And as for them who make it their business to run through books of a polemical nature, in what subject soever, in pursuit of what is personal, ridiculous, invective, beating every chapter and section to find only what ought not to be there, and recoiling in their spirits upon the appearance of that which is serious and pressing to the cause in hand, I suppose you judge them not worthy to be attended to with such an imposition upon the time and diligence of those who sincerely seek the truth in love as the satisfying of their vain humour would require. It is, indeed, of sad consideration to see how some learned men (forgetting the loss of precious hours wherewith they punish their

[1] Hor. Od., lib. v. 6. [2] Ibid.

readers thereby), in discourses of this nature, do offend against their professed intendments, by perpetual diversions, in long personal harangues, delighting some for a moment, instructing none in the matter inquired into. Some parts of this treatise you may perhaps judge not so closely and scholastically argumentative as the regular laws of an accurate disputation would require. In the same judgment with you is the author, when yet he supposes himself not without just apology, and that such as renders his way of procedure not blameworthy; whereas, otherwise, he should not think any excuse sufficient to expiate such an error. He is worthily blamed who had not rather choose to want a fault than an excuse. The truth is, neither would the matter treated of, nor the persons for whose sakes chiefly this labour was undertaken, admit of an accurate scholastical procedure in all parts of the treatise. The doctrine asserted and the error opposed are the concernment of the common people of Christianity. Arminianism is crept into the bodies of sundry congregations, and the weaker men are who entertain it, the more gross and carnal are their notions and conceptions in and about it. Pelagius himself was never so injurious to the grace of God as some amongst us. Now, the souls of [the] men whose good is sought in this work are no less precious in the sight of God, though they are unacquainted with philosophical terms and ways of arguing, than the souls of the most learned. Besides, that which we account our wisdom and learning may, if too rigorously attended, be our folly. When we think to sharpen the reason of the Scripture, we may straiten the efficacy of the spirit of it. It is oftentimes more effectual in its own liberty than when restrained to our methods of arguing, and the weapons of it keener in their own soft breathings than when sharpened in the forge of Aristotle. There is a way of persuasion and conviction in the Scriptures that is more divine and sublime than to be reduced to any rules of art that men can reach unto. God in his word instructs men, to make them "wise unto salvation." Syllogisms are not, doubtless, the only way of making men wise with human wisdom, much less divine. Some testimonies, on this account, are left at their own liberty, improved only by explanation, that they might lose nothing of their own strength, seeing no other can be added to them. Where the corrupt philosophy, or sophistical arguings, or, indeed, regular syllogistical proceedings, of the adversaries, have rendered a more close, logical way of proceeding necessary, I hope your favourable judgments will not find cause to complain of the want thereof. Whatever is amiss, whatever is defective, whatever upon any account cometh short of desire or expectation, as I know none in the world more able to discern and find out than yourselves, so there are none from whom I can expect, and justly promise myself, a more easy and candid censure, a more free and general pardon, a more favourable acceptation of this endeavour for the service of the truth, than from you. Besides that personal amity and respect which God by his providence hath given me (one altogether unworthy of such an alloy of common perplexities in his pilgrimage) with you and amongst you, besides that readiness and ingenuous promptness of mind unto condescension and candid reception of labours in this kind which your own great worth and abilities furnish you withal, exempting you and lifting you above that pedantic severity and humour of censure which possesseth sciolists and men corrupted with a desire of emerging in the repute of others, you know full well in what straits, under what diversions, employments, business of sundry natures, incumbent on me from the relations wherein I stand in the university, and on sundry other accounts, this work hath been carried on. The truth is, no small portion of it owes its rise to journeys, and such like avocations from my ordinary course of studies and employments, with some spare hours, for the most part in time of absence from all books and assistances of that nature whatever. Not longer to be burdensome unto you with things of no greater concernment than what may have respect to one every way so unworthy as myself,

what is of the seed which God graciously supplied, I am sure will find acceptance with you; and what is of its worthless author, or that I have added, I am fully content may be consumed by the fire that tries our works of what sort they are.

My daily prayer, honoured brethren, shall be on your behalf, that in the days wherein we see so many fall from the truth and oppose it on the one hand, a great indifference as to the things of God leading captive so many on the other, so few remaining made useful to God in their generations by a conjunction of zeal for the truth and ability unto its defence, and those for the most part so closely engaged in, and their hands so filled with, the work of public beseeching men to be reconciled to God in Christ, and building up of them who are called in their most holy faith, you may receive help from above, and encouragement to engage you by all means possible to spread abroad a savour of the gospel of Jesus Christ, and to labour continually that the truths of God (for whose defence you are particularly appointed) may not be cast down, nor trampled on under the feet of men of corrupt minds, lying in wait to deceive, alluring and beguiling unstable souls with enticing words of human wisdom, or any glorious show and pretence whatever, turning them from the simplicity of the gospel and the truth as it is in Jesus; that you may not faint nor wax weary, notwithstanding all the opposition, contempt, scorn, you do or may meet withal, nor even be turned aside to corrupt dalliances with error and falsehood, as is the manner of some, who yet would be accounted sound in the faith; but keeping close to the form of wholesome words, and answering the mould of gospel doctrine, whereinto you have been cast, may shine as lights in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, knowing that it is but yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry. Yea, come, Lord Jesus, come. So prays your unworthy fellow-labourer and brother in our dear Lord Jesus,

JOHN OWEN.

A PREFACE TO THE READER.

Reader,

If thy inquiry be only after the *substance* of the truth in the ensuing treatise contended for, I desire thee not to stay at all upon this preliminary discourse, but to proceed thither where it is expressly handled from the Scriptures, without the intermixture of any human testimonies or other less necessary circumstances, wherein perhaps many of them may not be concerned whose interest yet lies in the truth itself, and it is precious to their souls. That which now I intend and aim at is, to give an account to the *learned* reader of some things nearly relating to the doctrine whose protection, in the strength of Him who gives to his [servants] suitable helps for the works and employments he calls them to, I have undertaken, and what entertainment it hath formerly found and received in the church, and among the saints of God. For the accomplishment of this intendment a brief mention of the doctrine itself will make way. Whom in this controversy we intend by the names of "saints" and "believers," the treatise following will abundantly manifest. The word *perseverantia* is of most known use in ecclesiastical writers: Austin hath a book with the inscription of it on its forehead. The word in the New Testament signifying the same thing is ἐπιμονή. Of them that followed Paul, it is said that he "persuaded them ἐπιμένειν τῇ χάριτι τοῦ Θεοῦ," Acts xiii. 43; that is, "to persevere." Ὑπομονη is of the same import: Ὁ δὲ ὑπομείνας εἰς τέλος οὗτος σωθήσεται, Matt. x. 22,—"He that persevereth to the end." The Vulgar Latin renders that word almost constantly by *persevero*. Καρτερία is a word also of the same signification, and which the Scripture useth to express the same thing. Κράτος is sometimes by a metathesis expressed κάρτος: thence is κάρτα, *valde;* and καρτερέω, spoken of him who is of a valiant, resolved mind. "By faith Moses left Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king, τὸν γὰρ ἀόρατον ὡς ὁρῶν ἐκαρτέρησε," Heb. xi. 27;—"As eyeing the Invisible, he endured (his trial) with a constant, valiant mind." Προσκαρτερέω from thence is most frequently to persevere, Acts i. 14; and Ἦσαν δὲ προσκαρτεροῦντες τῇ διδαχῇ τῶν ἀποστόλων, Acts ii. 42,—"They persevered in the doctrine of the apostles." Προσκαρτέρησις, once used in the New Testament, is rendered by our translators, "perseverance," Eph. vi. 18. In what variety of expression the thing is revealed in the Scripture is in the treatise itself abundantly declared. The Latin word is classical: *persevero* is *constanter sum severus.* In that sense, as Seneca says, "Res severa est verum gaudium." Its extreme in excess is pertinacy, if these are not rather distinguished from their objects than in themselves. Varro, lib. iv. De Ling. Lat., tells us that *pertinacia* is a continuance or going on in that wherein one ought not to continue or proceed; *perseverantia* is that whereby any one continues in that wherein he ought so to do. Hence is that definition of it commonly given by the schoolmen from Austin, lib. lxxxiii. qu. 31,

who took it from Cicero (one they little acquainted themselves withal), lib. ii. De Invent. cap. liv. It is, say they, "In ratione bene consideratâ stabilis et perpetua permansio."

And this at present may pass for a general description of it that is used in an *ethical* and *evangelical* sense. Perseverance was accounted a commendable thing among philosophers. *Morally,* perseverance is that part of fortitude whereby the mind is established in the performance of any good and necessary work, notwithstanding the assaults and opposition it meets withal, with that tediousness and wearisomeness which the protraction of time in the pursuit of any affairs is attended withal. Aristotle informs us that it is exercised about things troublesome, lib. vii. cap. vi., Eth. Nicom., giving a difference between continence with its opposite vice, and forbearance or perseverance: Τούτων δ' ὁ μεν περὶ ἡδονὰς, ἀκρατὴς, ὁ δ' ἐγκρατής. Ὁ δε περὶ λύπας μαλακὸς, ὁ δε καρτερικός. He that abides in his undertaken work, so it be good and honest, notwithstanding that trouble and perplexity he may meet withal, is καρτερικός. Hence he tells us that καρτερικῶς ζῆν, as well as σωφρόνως, is not pleasant to many, lib. x. cap. ix.; and that because so to live implies difficulty and opposition. And he also, as Varro in the place above mentioned, distinguishes it from pertinacy. And of men infected with that depraved habit of mind he says there are three sorts, ἰδιογνώμονες, ἀμαθεῖς, and ἄγροικοι. All these are, in his judgment, ἰσχυρογνώμονες, Nicom., lib. vii. cap. ix.; which perverse disposition of spirit he there clearly manifests to be sufficiently differenced from a stable, resolved frame of mind, whatever it may resemble it in. Now, though there is no question but that of two persons continuing in the same work or opinion, one may do it out of pertinacy, the other out of perseverance, yet amongst men, who judge of the minds of others by their fruits, and of the acts of their minds by their objects, these two dispositions or habits are universally distinguished, as before by Varro. Hence the terms of "pertinacy" and "obstinacy" being thrust into the definition of heresy by them who renounce any infallible living judge and determiner in matters of faith, to make way for the inflicting of punishment on the entertainers and maintainers thereof. They take no thought of proving it such, but only because it is found in persons embracing such errors. The same affection of mind, with the same fruits and demonstrations of it, in persons embracing the truth, would by the same men be termed perseverance. But this is not that whereof I treat.

Evangelical perseverance is from the Scripture at large explained in the book itself. As it relates to our acceptation with God, and the immutability of justification (which is the chief and most eminent part of the doctrine contended for), as it hath no conformity in any thing with the moral perseverance before described, so indeed it is not comprehended in that strict notion and signification of the word itself which denotes the continuation of some act or acts in us, and not the uninterruptibleness of any act of God. This, then, is the cause of perseverance, rather than perseverance itself, yet such a cause as being established, the effect will certainly and uncontrollably ensue. They who go about to assert a perseverance of saints cut off from the absolute unchangeableness of the decree, purpose, and love of God, attended with a possibility of a contrary event, and that not only in respect of the free manner of its carrying on, whereby he that wills to persevere may not will so to do, but also in respect of the issue and end itself, will, I doubt not, if they are serious in what they pretend, find themselves entangled in their undertaking. As perseverance is a grace in the subjects on whom it is bestowed, so it relates either to the

spiritual habit of faith or the principle of new life they have received from God, or to the actual performance of those duties wherein they ought to abide. In the first sense it consists in the point of *being* or *not being*. Whilst the habit of faith remains, there is in respect thereof an uninterrupted perseverance in him in whom it is; and this we contend for. As it respects actions flowing from that habit and principle, it expatiates itself in a large field; for as it imports not at all a perpetual performance of such acts without intermission (which were naturally as well as spiritually impossible, whilst we carry about us a "body of death"), so neither doth it necessarily imply a constant tenor of proceeding in the performance of them, but is consistent with a change in degrees of performance, and in other respects also not now to be insisted on. Perseverance in this sense being the uninterrupted continuance of habitual grace in the hearts of believers, without intercision, with such a walking in obedience as God, according to the tenor of the new covenant, will accept, upon the whole of the matter it is in its own nature (as every thing else is that hath not its being from itself) liable and obnoxious to alteration; and therefore must be built and reposed on that which is in itself immutable, that it may be rendered, on that supposition, immutable also. Therefore is perseverance in this sense resolved into that cause of it before mentioned; which to do is the chief endeavour of the following treatise. Of the groundlessness of their opinion who, granting final perseverance, do yet plead for the possibility of a final apostasy and an intercision of faith, no more need be spoken but what, upon the account last mentioned, hath been argued already. Some discourses have passed both of old and of late concerning the nature of this perseverance, and wherein it doth properly consist. Many affirm it not really to differ from the habit of faith and love itself; for which Bradwardin earnestly contends, lib. ii. De Cau. Dei. cap. vii., concluding his disputation, that "Perseverantia habitualis est justitia habitualiter preservata; perseverantia actualis est justitiæ perseverantia actualis, ipsum vero perseverare, est justitiam præservare;" whereupon ("suo more") he infers this corollary: "Quod nomen perseverantiæ nullam rem absolutam essentialiter significat, sed accidentaliter, et relative, charitatem videlicet, sive justitiam, cum respectu futuræ permansionis continue usque in finem; et quod non improbabiliter posset dici perseverantiam esse ipsam relationem hujus." And therefore in the next chapter, to that objection, "If perseverance be no more but charity or righteousness, then every one that hath once obtained these, or true grace, must also persevere," he returns no answer at all, plainly insinuating his judgment to be so; of which afterward. And therefore he spends his 13th chapter of the same book to prove that the Holy Spirit is that "auxilium," as he called it, whereby any persevere. And, chap. i., he resolves all preservation from being overcome by temptation, or not being tempted to a prevalency (the same for substance with perseverance), into the will and purpose of God. "Quicunque," saith he, "non tentatur, hoc necessario est a deo, quod non tentatur. Sicut 11ª pars 13ⁱ primi probat; et per 22ᵘᵐ primi, Deus necessario habet aliquem actum voluntatis circa talem non tentationem, et non nolitionem, quia tunc per decimum primi non tentaretur, ergo volitionem, quæ per idem decimum ipsum tentari non sinit," etc. Others render it as a gift superadded to faith and love; of which judgment Austin seems to have been, who is followed by sundry of the schoolmen, with many of the divines of the reformed churches. Hence is that conclusion of Alvarez, De Auxil., lib. x. disp. 103, "Secundum fidem catholicam asserendum est, præter gratiam habitualem et virtutes infusas esse necessarium ad perse-

verandum in bono usque in finem auxilium speciale, supernaturale scilicet donum perseverantiæ." And of this proposition he says, "In hac omnes catholici conveniunt." Of the same judgment was his master, Thomas, lib. iii. Con. Gen. cap. clv.; where, also, he gives this reason of his opinion: "Illud quod natura sua est variabile, ad hoc quod figatur in uno, indiget auxilio alicujus moventis immobilis; sed liberum arbitrium, etiam existens in gratia habituali, ad hue manet variabile, et flexibile a bono in malum: ergo ad hoc quod figatur in bono, et perseveret in illo usque ad finem, indiget speciali Dei auxilio:"—the same argument having been used before him by Bradwardin, though to another purpose, namely, not to prove perseverance to be a superadded gift to saving grace, which, as before was observed, he denied, but to manifest that it was immediately and wholly from God. His words are, lib. ii. cap. viii., Corol., "Sicut secundum primi docet, omne quod est naturale, et non est per se tale, sed est mutabile in non tale, si manere debeat immutatum, oportet quod innitatur continue alicui per se fixo; quare et continue quilibit justus Deo." The same schoolmen also (a generation of men exceeding ready to speak of any thing, though they know not what they speak nor whereof they affirm) go yet farther, some of them, and will distinguish between the *gift of perseverance* and *the gift* [*of*] *confirmation in grace!* He before mentioned, after a long dispute (namely, 104), concludes: "Ex his sequitur differentiam inter donum perseverantiæ et confirmationis in gratia" (he means that which is granted in via) "in hoc consistere, quod donum perseverantiæ nullam perfectionem intrinsecam constituit in ipsa gratia habituali, quod tamen perfectionem intrinsecam illi tribuit confirmatio in gratia." What this intrinsical perfection of habitual grace, given it by confirmation, is, he cannot tell; for in those who are so confirmed in grace he asserts only an impeccability upon supposition, and that not alone from their intrinsical principle, as it is with the blessed in heaven, but from help and assistance also daily communicated from without. Durandus, in 3 d. 3 q. 4, assigns the deliverance from sin, which those who are confirmed in grace do obtain, unto the Holy Ghost. So far well; but he kicks down his milk by his addition, that he doth it only by the removal of all occasion of sin. But of these persons, and their judgment on the point under debate, more afterward.

For the thing itself last proposed, on what foot of account it is placed, and on what foundation asserted, the treatise itself will discover. That the thing aimed at is not to be straitened or restrained to any one peculiar act of grace will easily appear. The main foundation of that which we plead for is the eternal purpose of God, which his own nature requireth to be absolutely immutable and irreversible. The eternal act of the will of God designing some to salvation by Christ, infallibly to be obtained, for "the praise of the glory of his grace," is the bottom of the whole, even that foundation which standeth for ever, having this seal, "The Lord knoweth them that are his." For the accomplishment of this eternal purpose, and for the procurement of all the good things that lie within the compass of its intendment, are the oblation and intercession, the whole mediatory undertaking of Christ, taking away sin, bringing in life and immortality, interposed, giving farther causal influence into the truth contended for. In him and for his sake, as God graciously, powerfully, and freely gives his Holy Spirit, faith, and all the things that accompany salvation, unto all them whom he accepts and pardons, by his being made "sin for them" and "righteousness unto them;" so he takes them thereby into an everlasting covenant that shall not be broken, and hath therein given them innumerable promises that he will continue to be their God for ever, and

preserve them to be, and in being, his people. To this end, because the principle of grace and living to him, as in them inherent, is a thing in its own nature changeable and liable to failing, he doth, according to his promise, and for the accomplishment of his purpose, daily make out to them, by his Holy Spirit, from the great treasury and storehouse thereof, the Lord Jesus Christ, helps and supplies, increasing of faith, love, and holiness, recovering them from falls, healing their backslidings, strengthening them with all might, according to his glorious power, unto all patience and long-suffering with joyfulness; so preserving them by his power through faith unto salvation. And in this way of delivering the doctrine contended about, it is clearly made out that the disputes mentioned are as needless as groundless; so that we shall not need to take them into the state of the controversy in hand, though I shall have occasion once more to reflect upon them when I come to the consideration of the doctrine of the schoolmen in reference to the opinion proposed to debate. The main of our inquiry is after the purpose, covenant, and promises of God, the undertaking of Christ, the supplies of grace promised and bestowed in him; on which accounts we do assert and maintain that all true believers,—who are, in being so, interested in all those causes of preservation,—shall infallibly be preserved unto the end in the favour of God, and in such a course of gospel obedience as he will accept in Jesus Christ.

That, as was formerly said, which at present I aim at in reference to this truth is, to declare its rise and progress, its course and opposition, which it hath found in several ages of the church, with its state and condition at this day, in respect of acceptance with the people of God.

Its rise, with all other divine truths, it owes only to revelation from God, manifested in the scriptures of the Old and New Testament. Some of the most eminent places wherein it is delivered in the Old Testament are, Gen. iii. 15, xvii. 1; Deut. xxxiii. 3; Josh. i. 5; 1 Sam. xii. 22; Ps. i. 3, xxiii. 4, 6, xxxvii. 39, 40, lii. 8, 9, lxxxix. 31–36, xxxiii. 9–11, xcii. 12, etc.; Isa. xxvii. 3, xlvi. 4, lix. 21, liv. 9, 10, iv. 5, 6, xl. 27–31, xliii. 1–7; Jer. iii. 23, xxxi. 31–34, xxxii. 38–40; Ezek. xxxvi. 25–27; Hos. ii. 19, 20; Zech. x. 12; Mal. iii. 6, with innumerable other places. In the New Testament God hath not left this truth and work of his grace without witness; as in sundry other places, so it is testified unto Matt. vi. 13, vii. 24, 25, xii. 20, xvi. 18, xxiv. 24; Luke i. 70–75, viii. 8, xxii. 32; John iii. 36, iv. 13, 14, v. 24, vi. 35–57, vii. 38, 39, viii. 35, 36, x. 27–30, xiii. 1, xiv. 15–17, xvi. 27, xvii. throughout; Acts. ii. 47, xiii. 48; Rom. vi. 14, viii. 1, 16, 17, 28–34, etc.; 1 Cor. i. 8, 9, x. 13, 14, xv. 49, 58; 2 Cor. i. 21, 22; Eph. i. 13, 14, iii. 17, iv. 30, v. 25–27; Gal. ii. 20; Phil. i. 6, ii. 13; 1 Thess. v. 24; 2 Tim. iv. 17, 18; Tit. i. 1; Heb. vi. 19, x. 38, 39, xii. 9, 10, xiii. 5; 1 Pet. i. 2–5; 1 John ii. 19, 27, iii. 9, 19, v. 13, 18; Jude 1; Rev. xx. 6. So plentifully hath the Lord secured this sacred truth, wherein he hath inwrapped so much (if not, as in the means of conveyance, the whole) of that peace, consolation, and joy, which he is willing the heirs of promise should receive. Whether the faith hereof, thus plentifully delivered to the saints, found acceptance with the primitive Christians, to the most of whom it was "given not only to believe but also to suffer for Christ," to me is unquestionable. And I know no better proof of what those first churches did believe than by showing what they ought to believe; which I shall unquestionably be persuaded they did believe, unless most pregnant testimony be given of their apostasy. That Paul believed it for himself and concerning others is evident. Rom. viii. 38, 39; 1 Cor. i. 8, 9; Phil. i. 6; Heb. vi. 9, 10, are sufficient proof of his

faith herein. That he built up others in the same persuasion, to the enjoyment of the same peace and assurance with himself, is undeniable. And if there be any demonstration to be made of the belief of the first Christians, if any evidence comparable unto this, I shall not deny but that it ought to be attended unto. But that we may not seem willing to decline the consideration of what those who went before us in the several ages and generations past apprehended, and have by any means communicated unto us of their thoughts, about the business of our contest (having no reason so to be), I shall, after a little preparation made to that work, present the reader with something of my observations to that end and purpose.

Of the authority of the ancients in matters of religion and the worship of God, of the right use and improvement of their writings, of the several considerations that are to be had and exercised by them who would read them with profit and advantage, after many disputes and contests between the Papists and divines of the reformed churches, the whole concernment of that controversy is so clearly stated, managed, and resolved by Monsieur Daillé, in his book of the "Right Use of the Fathers," that I suppose all farther labour in that kind may be well spared. Those who intend to weigh their testimony to any head of Christian doctrine do commonly distinguish them into three great periods of time. The first of these is comprehensive of them who lived and wrote *before the doctrine concerning which they are called out to give in their thoughts and verdict had received any signal opposition, and eminent discussion in the church on that account.* Such are the writers of the first three hundred years, before the Nicene council, in reference to the doctrine of the Trinity; and so the succeeding writers, before the stating of the Macedonian, Eutychian, and Nestorian heresies. In the next are they ranked *who bare the burden and heat of the opposition made to any truth*, and on that occasion wrote expressly and at large on the controverted doctrines; which is the condition of Athanasius, Basil, Gregory, and some others, in that Arian controversy. And in the last place succeed those *who lived after such concussions*, which are of less or more esteem, according as the doctrines inquired after were less or more corrupted in the general apostasy of the latter days. According to this order, our first period of time will end with the rise of the Pelagian heresy, which gave occasion to the thorough, full, and clear discussion of the whole doctrine concerning the grace of God, whereof that in whose defence we are engaged is no small portion; the next, of those whom God raised up to make head against that subtle opposer of his grace, with his followers, during the space of a hundred years and somewhat onwards ensuing the promulgation of that heresy. What have been the thoughts of men in the latter ages until the Reformation, and of the Romanists since to this day, manifested in a few pregnant instances, will take up the third part of this design. Of the judgment of the Reformed Churches, as they are commonly called, I shall speak particularly in the close of this discourse. For the first of these: Not to insist on the paucity of writers in the first three hundred years, sundry single persons in the following ages have severally written three times as much as we have left and remaining of all the others (the names of many who are said to have written being preserved by Eusebius, Eccles. Hist., and Hierom, Lib. de Script., their writings being perished in their days), nor in general of that corruption whereunto they have almost every one of them been unquestionably exposed, I must be forced to preface the nomination of them with some considerations:—

1. The first [consideration will be found] in that known passage of Hege-

sippus, in Euseb. Hist. Eccles., lib. iii. cap. xxxii.: Ὡς ἄρα μέχρι τῶν τότε χρόνων, παρθένος καθαρὰ καὶ ἀδιάφθορος ἔμεινεν ἡ ἐκκλησία·—εἰς ὃ ὁ ἱερὸς τῶν ἀποστόλων χορὸς διάφορον εἴληφει τοῦ βίου τέλος, παρεληλύθει τε ἡ γενεὰ ἐκείνη τῶν αὐταῖς ἀκοαῖς τῆς ἐνθέου σοφίας ἐπακοῦσαι κατηξιωμένων, τηνικαῦτα τῆς ἀθέου πλάνης τὴν ἀρχὴν ἐλάμβανεν ἡ σύστασις, διὰ τῆς τῶν ἑτεροδιδασκάλων ἀπάτης, οἳ καὶ, ἅτε μηδενὸς ἔτι τῶν ἀποστόλων λειπομένου, γυμνῇ λοιπὸν ἤδη τῇ κεφαλῇ τῷ τῆς ἀληθείας κηρύγματι τὴν ψευδώνυμον γνῶσιν ἀντικηρύττειν ἐπεχείρουν. So far he, setting out the corruption of the church, even as to doctrine, immediately after the apostles fell asleep; whereof whosoever will impartially, and with disengaged judgment, search into the writings of those days that do remain, will perhaps find more cause than is commonly imagined with him to complain.

2. The main work of the writers of the first ages being to contend with *heathenish idolaters*, to convince them of their madness and folly; to write *apologies* for the worship of God in Christ in general, so to dissuade their rulers from persecution; or in contesting with heretics, for the most part appearing to be men either corrupt in their lives, or mad and brain-sick, as we say, as to their imaginations, or denying the truth of the person of Christ,—what can we expect from them as delivered directly and on set purpose to the matter of our present contest? Some principles may in them possibly be discovered from whence, by a regular deduction, some light may be obtained into their thoughts concerning the points in difference. Thus Junius thinks, and not without cause, that the whole business of predestination may be stated upon this one principle, "That faith is the free gift of God, flowing from his predestination and mercy;" and concerning this he saith, "Hoc autem omnes patres uno consensu ex Christo et Paulo agnoverunt; ipse Justinus Martyr in Apolog. ii., et gravissime vero Clemens Alexandrinus, in hac alioquin palæstra non ita exercitatus ut sequentia secula," Hom., lib. ii. "Basilii et Valentini dogma esse dicit, quod fides a natura sit," Consid. Senten. Pet. Baroni. Without this what advantage can be taken, or what use can be made, for the discovery of the mind of any of the ancients, by cropping off some occasional expressions from their occasions and aims, I know not. Especially would I more peremptorily affirm this could I imagine any of them wrote as Jerome affirms of himself that he sometimes did, Epist. ad August., which is among his epistles, lxxxix. T. 2. "Itaque," saith he, "ut simpliciter fateor, legi hæc omnia, et in mente mea plurima congervans, accito notario vel mea, vel aliena dictavi, nec ordinis, nec verborum interdum nec sensuum memor." Should any one say so of himself in these days, he would be accounted little better than a madman. Much, then, on this account (or at least not much to the purpose) is not to be expected from the fathers of the first ages.

3. Another observation to our purpose lies well expressed in the beginning of the 14th chapter of Bellarmine's second book de Grat. et Lib. Arbit. "Præter Scripturas adferunt alia testimonia patrum," saith he, speaking of those who opposed God's free predestination; to which he subjoins, "Neque est hoc novum argumentum, sed antiquissimum. Scribit enim S. Prosper in Epistola ad S. Augustinum, Gallos qui sententiam ejusdem Augustini de predestinatione calumniabantur, illud potissimum objicere solitos quod ea sententia doctrinæ veterum videbatur esse contraria. Sed respondet idem Augustinus in Lib. de Bono Perseverantiæ, veteres patres, qui ante Pelagium floruerunt, quæstionem istam nunquam accurate tractasse sed incidenter solum, et quasi per transitum illam attigisse. Addit vero, in fundamento hujus sententiæ (quod est gratiam Dei non præveniri

ab ullo opere nostro sed contra, ab illa omnia opera nostra prævenîri, ita ut nihil omnino boni, quod attinet ad salutem sit in nobis, quod non est nobis ex Deo), convenire Catholicos omnes; et ibidem citat Cyprianum, Ambrosium, et Nazianzenum, quibus addere possumus Basilium et Chrysostomum." To the same purpose, with application to a particular person, doth that great and holy doctor discourse, De Doctrin. Christiana, lib. iii. cap. xxxiii. Saith he, "Non erat expertus hanc hæresin Tychonius, quæ nostro tempore exorta, multum nos, ut gratiam Dei, quæ per Dominum nostrum Jesum Christum est, adversus eam defenderemus exercuit, et secundum id quod ait apostolus, "oportet hæreses esse, ut probati manifesti fiunt in nobis," multo vigilantiores, diligentioresque reddidit, ut adverteremus in Scripturis sanctis, quod istum Tychonium minus attentum minusque, sine noste solicitum fugit." That also of Jerome in his second Apology against Rufinus, in reference to a most weighty article of Christian religion, is known to all. "Fieri potest," saith he, "ut vel simpliciter erraverint, vel alio sensu scripserint, vel a librariis imperitis eorum paulatim scripta corrupta sint; vel certe antequam in Alexandria, quasi dæmonium meridianum, Arius nasceretur, innocenter quædam, et minus caute locuti sunt, et quæ non possunt perversorum hominum calumniam declinare." And what he spake of the writers before Arius in reference to the person of Christ, we may of them before Pelagius in reference to his grace. Hence Pererius, in Rom. cap. viii., disput. 22, tells us (how truly *ipse viderit*, I am not altogether of his mind) that [as] for those authors that lived before Austin's time, all the Greek fathers, and a considerable part of the Latin, were of opinion that the cause of predestination was the foresight which God had either of men's good works or of their faith; either of which opinions, he assures us, is manifestly contrary to the authority of the Scriptures, and particularly to the doctrine of St Paul. I am not, as I said, wholly of his mind, partly upon the account of the observations made by his fellow-Jesuit out of Austin, before mentioned, partly upon other accounts also. Upon these and the like considerations, much, I presume, to the business in hand will not be produced on either side from the fathers that wrote before the rise of the Pelagian heresy. And if any one of the parties at this day litigant about the doctrine of the grace of God should give that advice that Sisinius and Agelius the Novatians sometimes gave, as Sozomen reports of them (Hist. Eccles., lib. vii. cap. xii.), to Nectarius, by him communicated to the emperor Theodosius, to have the quarrel decided by those that wrote before the rise of the controversy, as it would be unreasonable in itself, so I persuade myself neither party would accept of the condition, neither had the Catholics of those days got any thing if they had attended to the advice of these Novatians. But, these few observations premised, something as to particular testimonies may be attended unto.

That we may proceed in some order, not leaving those we have nothing to say to, nor are willing to examine, whilst they are but thin and come not in troops, unsaluted, the first writings that are imposed on us after the canonical Scriptures are the eight books of Clemens, commonly called the Apostles' Constitutions, being pretended to be written by him at their appointment, with the Canons ascribed to the same persons. These we shall but salute: for besides that they are faintly defended by any of the Papists, disavowed and disclaimed as apocryphal by the most learned of them, as Bellarmine, De Script. Eccles. in Clem., who approves only of fifty canons out of eighty-five; Baronius, An. Dom. 102, 14, who adds thirty more; and Binius, with a little enlargement of canons, in Tit. Can. T. I,

Con. p. 17; and have been thoroughly disproved and decried by all protestant writers that have had any occasion to deal with them; their folly and falsity, their impostures and triflings, have of late been so fully manifested by Dallæus, De Pseudepigraphis Apostol., that nothing need be added thereunto. Of him may Doctor H. H.[1] learn the truth of that insinuation of his, Dissert. de Episcop. ii. cap. vi. sect. 3, "Canone apostolico secundo semper inter genuinos habito;" but of the confidence of this author in his assertions afterward. This, indeed (insisted on by Dallæus, and the learned Usher in his notes upon Ignatius), is childishly ridiculous in them, that whereas it is pretended that these Constitutions were made at a convention of the apostles, as lib. vi. cap. xiv., they are brought in discoursing ἡμεῖς οὖν ἐπὶ τὸ αὐτὸ γενόμενοι, Πέτρος καὶ Ἀνδρέας, Ἰάκωβος καὶ Ἰωάννης υἱοὶ Ζεβεδαίου, etc. They are made to inform us, lib. ii. cap. lvii., that the Acts written by Luke and read in the churches are theirs, and the four books of the Gospel; whereas the story of the death of James (here said to be together with the apostles) is related Acts xii., and John, by the consent of all, wrote not his Gospel until after the dissolution of his associates. Also, they make Stephen and Paul to be together at the making of those Constitutions, lib. viii. cap. iv. (whereas the martyrdom of Stephen was before the conversion of Paul), and yet also mention the stoning of Stephen, lib. viii. cap. xlvi. They tell us whom they appointed bishops of Jerusalem after the death of James, and yet James is one of them who is met together with them, lib. vii. cap. xlviii. Nay, mention is made of Cerinthus, and that Mark the heretic, Menander, Basilides, and Saturninus, were known and taken notice of by the apostles, who all lived in the second century, about the reign of Hadrian, as Eusebius manifesteth, and Clem. Alex., Strom., lib. vii.

But, to leave such husks as these unto them who loathe manna, and will not feed on the bread that our heavenly Father hath so plentifully provided for all that live in his family or any way belong to his house, let us look onward to them that follow, of whose truth and honesty we have more assurance.

The first genuine piece that presents itself unto us on the roll of antiquity is that epistle of Clemens which, in the name of the church of Rome, he wrote to the divided church of Corinth; which being abundantly testified to of old, to the great contentment of the Christian world, was published here at Oxford some few years since,—a writing full of ancient simplicity, humility, and zeal. As to our present business, much, I confess, cannot be pleaded from hence, beyond a negative impeachment of that great and false clamour which our adversaries have raised, of the consent of the primitive Christians with them in their by-paths and ways of error. It is true, treating of a subject diverse from any of those heads of religion about which our contests are, it is not to be expected that he should anywhere plainly, directly, and evidently, deliver his judgment unto them. This, therefore, I shall only say, that in that whole epistle there is not one word, iota, or syllable, that gives countenance to the tenet of our adversaries in the matter of the saints' perseverance; but that, on the contrary, there are sundry expressions asserting such a foundation of the doctrine we maintain as will with good strength infer the truth of it. Page 4, setting forth the virtues of the Corinthians before they fell into the schism that occasioned his epistle, he minds them that ἀγὼν ἦν ὑμῖν ἡμέρας τε καὶ νυκτὸς ὑπὲρ πάσης τῆς ἀδελφότητος, εἰς τὸ σώζεσθαι μετ' ἐλέους καὶ

[1] The initials of Henry Hammond. An account of Owen's controversy with him will be found in a note at the end of the preface.—Ed.

συνειδήσεως τὸν ἀριθμὸν τῶν ἐκλεκτῶν αὐτοῦ. That God hath a certain number of elect to be saved, and for whose salvation, by his mercy, the church is to contend with him, is a principle wholly inconsistent with those on which the doctrine of the saints' apostasy is bottomed. Corresponding hereunto is that passage of his concerning the will of God, p. 12: Πάντας οὖν τοὺς ἀγαπητοὺς αὐτοῦ βουλόμενος μετανοίας μετασχεῖν, ἐστήριξεν τῷ παντοκρατορικῷ βουλήματι αὐτοῦ. A mere consideration of this passage causeth me to recall what but now was spoken, as though the testimony given to the truth in this epistle were not so clear as might be desired. The words now repeated contain the very thesis contended for. It is the beloved of God (or his chosen) whom he will have made partakers of saving repentance; and hereunto "he establisheth them" (for with that word is the defect in the sentence to be supplied) "by," or with, "the almighty will." Because he will have his beloved partakers of saving repentance and the benefits thereof, he confirms and establishes them in it with his omnipotent or sovereign will. The inconsistency and irreconcilableness of this assertion with the doctrine of these saints' apostasy, the learned reader needs not any assistance to manifest to him. Answerably hereunto he saith of God, Ἐκλογῆς μέρος (ἡμᾶς) ἐποίησεν ἑαυτῷ, p. 38 and p. 66: mentioning the blessedness of the forgiveness of sins, out of Ps. xxxii., he adds, Οὗτος ὁ μακαρισμὸς ἐγένετο ἐπὶ τοὺς ἐκλελεγμένους ὑπὸ τοῦ Θεοῦ διὰ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ τοῦ Κυρίου ἡμῶν. The elect of whom he speaks are those on whom, through and for Christ, God bestows the blessedness of justification; elect they are of God antecedently to the obtaining of that blessedness, and through that they do obtain it: so that in that short sentence of this author, the great pillar of the saints' perseverance, which is their free election, the root of all the blessedness which afterward they enjoy, is established. Other passages like to these there are in that epistle; which plainly deliver the primitive Christians of the church of Rome from any communion in the doctrine of the saints' apostasy, and manifest their perseverance in the doctrine of the saints' perseverance, wherein they had been so plentifully instructed, not long before, by the epistle of Paul unto them.

He who upon the roll of antiquity presents himself in the next place to our consideration is the renowned IGNATIUS, concerning whom I desire to beg so much favour of the learned reader as to allow me a diversion unto some thoughts and observations that belong to another subject than that which I have now peculiarly in hand, before I come to give him a taste of his judgment on the doctrine under debate.

As this Ignatius, bishop of the church at Antioch, was in himself a man of an excellent spirit, eminent in holiness, and to whom, on the behalf of Christ, it was given not only to believe on him, but also suffer for him, and on that account of very great and high esteem among the Christians of that age wherein he lived, and sundry others following, so no great question can be made but that he wrote, towards the end of his pilgrimage, when he was on his way to be offered up, through the Holy Spirit, by the mouths of wild beasts, to Jesus Christ, sundry epistles to sundry churches that were of chiefest note and name in the countries about. The concurrent testimony of the ancients in this matter of fact will give as good assurance as in this kind we are capable of; Eusebius reckons them up in order, so doth Jerome.

After them frequent mention is made of them by others, and special sayings in them are transcribed; and whereas it is urged by some that there is no mention of those epistles before the Nicene council,—before

which time it is as evident as if it were written with the beams of the sun, that many false and supposititious writings had been imposed on and were received by many in the church (as the story of Paul and Thecla is mentioned and rejected by Tertull. de Baptis., Hermæ Pastor. by others),—it is answered, that they were mentioned by Irenæus some good while before. Lib. v. cap. xxviii., saith he, "Quemadmodum quidam de nostris dixit, propter martyrium in Deum adjudicatus ad bestias; quoniam frumentum sum Christi et per dentes bestiarum molor ut mundus panis Dei inveniar." Which words, to the substance of them, are found in these epistles, though some say nothing is here intimated of any epistles or writings, but of a speech that might pass among the Christians by tradition, such as they had many among themselves, even of our Saviour's, some whereof are mentioned by Grotius on these words of Paul, "Remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive." What probability or ground for conviction there is in these or the like observations and answers is left to the judgment of all. This is certain, that the first mentioning of them in antiquities is to be clearly received (and that perhaps with more than the bare word of him that recites and approves of the Epistle of Jesus Christ to Abgarus the king of the Edessenes, or of him that reckons Seneca among the ecclesiastical writers upon the account of his epistles to Paul), or the following testimonies, which are heaped up in abundance by some who think (but falsely) that they have a peculiar interest inwrapped in the epistles now extant, will be of very small weight or value.

For my part, I am persuaded, with that kind of persuasion wherein in things of no greater moment I am content to acquiesce, that he did write seven epistles, and that much of what he so wrote is preserved in those that are now extant; concerning which the contests of learned men have drawn deep and run high in these latter days, though little to the advantage of the most that have laboured in that cause, as shall be manifested in the process of our discourse.

A late learned doctor,[1] in his dissertations about episcopacy, or dispute for it against Salmasius and Blondellus, tells us (that we may take a taste of his confidence in asserting), Dissert. ii. cap. xxiii. sect. 1, that Salmasius and Blondellus "mortalium omnium primi" thought these epistles to be feigned or counterfeit. And with more words, cap. xxiv. sect. 1, he would make us believe that these epistles of Ignatius were always of the same esteem with that of Clemens from Rome to the Corinthians, of which he treats at large in his fourth dissertation, or that of Polycarpus to the Philippians, which we have in Eusebius; and then he adds, that in the judgment of Salmasius and Blondellus, "Solus Ignatius *οἴχεται* cujus tamen epistolæ pari semper eum illis per universam ab omni ævo patrum nostrorum memoriam reverentia excipiebantur; nec prius a mortalium quovis in judicium vocabantur (multo minus ut in re certa et extra dubium posita inter plane *ἀδόκιμα* et *κίβδηλα* rejiciebantur), quam presbyteri Anglicani patribus suis contumeliam facere cœpissent iisque aut suppetias ferre, aut rem gratam facere (quibus illecebris adducti nescio), hi duo non ignobiles Presbyteranæ causæ hyperaspistæ in seipsos recepissent." Of his two learned antagonists, one is dead, and the other almost blind, or probably they would have dealt not much more gently with the doctor for his parenthesis ("quibus illecebris adducti nescio"), than one of them formerly did (Salmas. De Subscribendis et Signandis Testamentis seu Specimen Consula. Animad. Heraldi., cap. i. p. 19,

[1] "Unicum D. Blondellum aut alterum fortasse inter omnes mortales Walonem Messalinum, cap. xxv. sect. 3."

"Nuper quidem etiam nebulo in Anglia, Capellanus ut audio regis, Hammondus nomine, libro quem edidit de potestate clavium Salmasio iratus quod aliam quam ipse sententiam probet ac defendat, haud potuit majus convicium, quod ei dicerit, invenire, quam si grammaticum appellaret") for his terming him a grammarian; yet, indeed, of him (such was the hard entertainment he found on all hands), it is by many supposed that he was "illecebris adductus" (and they stick not to name the bait he was caught withal), wrought over in a manner to destroy the faith of that which he had before set up and established.

For the thing itself affirmed by the doctor, I cannot enough admire with what ostitancy or contempt he considers his readers (of which manner of proceeding this is very far from being the only instance), that he should confidently impose such things upon them. He that hath written so much about Ignatius, and doth so triumph in his authority, ought doubtless to have considered those concernments of his author which are obvious to every ordinary inquirer. Vedelius' edition of Ignatius, at Geneva, came forth with his notes in the year 1623, long before either Salmasius or Blondellus had written any thing about the supposititiousness of these epistles; in the apology for Ignatius, thereto prefixed, he is forced to labour and sweat in the answer of one, whom he deservedly styles *Virum doctissimum*, arguing (not contemptibly) that Ignatius never wrote any such epistles, and that all those which were carried about in his name were false and counterfeit.

But perhaps the doctor had taken caution of one of the fathers of his church, that "a Genevensibus istis typographis præter fraudes, et fucos, et præstigias non est quod quicquam expectemus" (Montacu. Appar. 1, lib. v. sect. 47, p. 19), and so thought not fit to look into any thing that comes from them.

Especially may this be supposed to have had some influence upon him, considering the gentle censure added in the next words by that reverend father of his church concerning the endeavour of Vedelius in his notes on that edition:—"Neque audax ille et importunus Ignatii censor, quicquam attulit ad paginas suas implendas præter inscitiam, et incuriam, et impudentiam singularem (nec sævi magne sacerdos) dum ad suum Genevatismum antiquitatem detorquet invitissimam, non autem quod oportuit, Calvinismum amussitat ad antiquitatem." And what, I pray, is the reason of his episcopal censure?—that he should deal with poor Vedelius in that language wherewith men of his order and authority were wont to deal with preaching ministers at their visitations? Why, this poor man, in that passage which you have in the Epistle to the Magnesians (in that edition, p. 56), when treating of the ancient fathers' expectations of the coming of Christ, retains the common reading of εἰς κενότητα ἐλπίδος ἦλθον, referring the word to their expectation of seeing him come in the flesh, (which, upon the testimony of our Saviour himself, they desired to see, and saw it not,) not correcting it by a change of κενότητα into κοινότητα ἐλπίδος, so referring it to their faith in Christ and salvation by him, as, in his judgment, he ought to have done,—Ἰδοὺ ὀλίγον πῦρ, ἡλίκην ὕλην ἀνάπτει. A little thing would provoke the indignation of a prelate against any thing that came from Geneva.

I say, I would suppose that this might divert our doctor from casting his eye upon Vedelius, whose defensative would have informed him that these epistles had been opposed as false and counterfeit before ever Salmasius or Blondellus had taken them into consideration, but that I find him sometimes insisting on that Geneva edition.

For whereas (Dissert. ii. cap. ii. sect. 11) he tells you that he intends to abide only upon the edition of Isaac Vossius, in Greek, published from the archives of the library of Lorenzo de Medici, and the Latin edition published by bishop Usher, out of our library here at Oxford; yet, cap. viii., being pressed with the testimony of the writer of the Epistle to the Magnesians, in that edition, calling episcopacy νεωτερικὴν τάξιν, plainly intimating a comparative novelty in that order to others in the churches, and fearing (as well he might) that his translation of νεωτερικὴ τάξις into "the ordination of a young man," would scarce be received by the men of his own prejudice (for surely he never supposed that he should impose on any other by such gross figments), he prefers the Vedelian edition, where these words are not so used, before it, and informs us that "sic legendum" (as it is in the Geneva edition) "suadet tota epistolæ series." Now, this truly is marvellous to me (if the doctor consulteth authors any farther than merely to serve his present turn), how he could ever advise with that edition of Vedelius, and yet so confidently affirm that Salmasius and Blondellus were the first that rejected these epistles as feigned and counterfeited.

But yet a little farther: The first edition of these epistles in Latin was Augustæ Vindelicorum, anno 1529; in Greek, at Basil, 1566: before which time, I suppose, the doctor expects not that any opposition should be made to them, considering the heaps of filth and dung that, until about that time, were owned for the offspring of the ancient fathers.

Upon their first appearing in the world, what is the entertainment they receive? One who was dead before either the doctor or either of his antagonists was born, and whose renown among the people of God will live when they are all dead, gives them this welcome into the world: "Ignatium quod obtendunt, si velint quicquam habere momenti; probent apostolos legem tulisse de quadragesima, et similibus corruptelis. Nihil næniis istis quæ sub Ignatii nomine editæ sunt putidius. Quo minus tolerabilis est eorum impudentia qui talibus larvis ad fallendum se instruunt," Calv. Inst., lib. i. cap. xiii. sect. 29.

Whatever be the judgment of our doctor concerning this man (as some there are of whom a learned bishop in this nation long ago complained, that they are still opening their mouths against Calvin, who helped them to mouths to speak with, Abbot. ad Thom.), he will in the judgment of some be so far accounted somebody as to take off from the confident assertion that Salmasius and Blondellus were "mortalium primi" that rejected these epistles.

The Centuriators of Magdeburg were esteemed to be somebodies in their days, and yet they make bold to call these epistles into question, and to tender sundry arguments to the impairing of their credit and authority. This then they, Cent. ii. cap. x., De Episcop. Antioch. ac primum de Ignatio:—

"Lectori pio et attento considerandum relinquimus quantum sit illis epistolis tribuendum. Non enim dubitamus quin in lectione earum cuilibet ista in mentem veniant; primum quod fere in omnibus epistolis, licet satis copiosis, occasio scribendi prætermittitur, nec vel divinare licet, quare potissimum ad hanc vel illam ecclesiam literas voluerit mittere. Deinde ipsius peregrinationis ratio non parvum injicit scrupulum considerantibus, quod multo rectiore et breviori itinere, Romam potuerit navigare, ut testatur vel ipsius Pauli exemplum. Expende quam longum sit iter, Antiochia ad littus Ægæi pelagi se recipere, ibique recta sursum versus Septentrionem ascendere, et præcipuas civitates in littore sitas usque ad Troadem perlus-

trare, cum tamen Romanum iter sit destinatum versus occasum. Tertio res ejusmodi in istas literas inspersæ sunt ut ad eas propemodum obstupescat lector, etc. Hæc cum alias non somnolento lectori incidant, non existimaverimus," etc.

Thus they, at the world's first awaking as to the consideration of things of this kind.

To them add the learned Whitaker, Cont. prima, De Perfect. Script. quæst. sext. c. 12, where, after he hath disputed against the credit of these epistles, jointly and severally, with sundry arguments, at length he concludes, "Sed de his epistolis satis multa, et de hoc Ignatio quid judicandum sit, satis ex iis constare potest quæ diximus. Ista Papistæ non audent tueri," etc. To whom sundry others might be added, convincing Salmasius and Blondellus not to have been "mortalium primi" that called them into question.

I have not insisted on what hath been spoken as though I were wholly of the mind of them who utterly condemn these epistles as false and counterfeit; though I know no possibility of standing before the arguments levied against them, notwithstanding the forementioned doctor's attempt to that purpose, without acknowledging so much corruption in them, additions and detractions from what they were when first written, as will render them not so clearly serviceable to any end or purpose whereunto their testimony may be required, as other unquestionable writings of their antiquity are justly esteemed to be. That these epistles have fallen into the hands of such unworthy impostors as have filled the latter ages with labour and travail to discover their deceits, the doctor himself granteth, Dissert. ii. cap. ii. sect. 6. "Nulla," saith he, "quidem nobis incumbit necessitas, ut in tanta exemplarium et editionum varietate et inconstantia, nihil uspiam Ignatio interpolatum aut adsutum affirmemus."

And, indeed, the foisted passages in many places are so evident, yea shameful, that no man who is not resolved to say any thing, without care of proof or truth, can once appear in any defensative about them. Of this sort are the shreds and pieces out of that branded counterfeit piece of Clemens, or the Apostles' Constitutions, which are almost in every epistle packed in in a bungling manner, oftentimes disturbing the sense and coherence of the place; yea, sometimes such things are thence transcribed as in them are considerable arguments of their corruption and falsehood: so is that period in the Epistle to the Magnesians, taken from Clemens. Constitut., lib. vi. cap. ii., Ἀβεδδαδὰν ὡσαύτως τῆς κεφαλῆς ἀφαιρεῖται δι' ὁμοίαν αἰτίαν. This Abeddadan being mentioned next after Absalom's dying by the loss of his head is therefore supposed to be Sheba, the son of Bichri; but whence that counterfeit Clemens had that name is not known. That the counterfeit Clemens by Abeddadan intended Sheba is evident from the words he assigns unto him in the place mentioned. Abeddadan said, Οὐκ ἔστι μοι μέρος ἐν Δαβὶδ, οὐδὲ κληρονομία ἐν υἱῷ Ἰεσσαί. And he joins him with Absalom in his rebellion. Such passages as these they are supposed to have received from that vain and foolish impostor; but if it be true, which some have observed, that there is not the least mention made of any of these fictitious Constitutions in the first three ages after Christ, and that the διδαχὴ ἀποστόλων mentioned by Eusebius and Athanasius, as also that διάταξις in Epiphanius, are quite other things than those eight books of Constitutions we now have, it may rather be supposed that that sottish deceiver raked up some of his filth from the corruption of these epistles than that any thing out of him is crept into them. Other instances might be given of stuffing these epistles with the

very garbage of that beast. Into what hands also these epistles have fallen by the way, in their journeying down towards these ends of the world, is evident from those citations made out of them by them of old, which now appear not in them. Theodoret, Dial. 3, adv. Hæres., gives us this sentence from Ignatius: Εὐχαριστίας καὶ προσφορὰς οὐκ ἀποδέχονται διὰ τὸ μὴ ὁμολογεῖν τὴν εὐχαριστίαν σάρκα εἶναι τοῦ σωτῆρος ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ τὴν ὑπὲρ τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν ἡμῶν παθοῦσαν ἣν χρηστότητι ὁ Πατὴρ ἤγειρεν· which words you will scarcely find in that Epistle to the Church of Smyrna, from whence they were taken. Jerome also, Dial. 3, con. Pelag., hath this passage of him and from him: "Ignatius vir apostolicus et martyr scribit audacter, elegit Dominus apostolos qui super omnes homines peccatores erant;" which words, as they are not now in these epistles, so, as one observes, if ever he wrote them, as is pretended, he did it *audacter* indeed. But of these things our doctor takes no notice.

The style of these epistles doth not a little weaken the credit of them, being turgent, swelling with uncouth words and phrases, affected manner and ways of expression, new compositions of words, multiplying titles of honour to men,—exceedingly remote and distant from the plainness and simplicity of the first writers among the Christians, as is evident by comparing these with the epistle of Clemens before mentioned, that of Polycarpus in Eusebius, [and of] the churches of Vienne and Lyons in that same author, and others. Instances for the confirmation of this observation are multiplied by Blondellus; my designed work will not allow me to insist on particulars. In many good words this charge is waived, by affirming that the author of these epistles was an Assyrian, and near to martyrdom, and that in the Scriptures there are sundry words of as hard a composition as those used by him, Ham. Dissert. ii. cap. iii.; and, as he says, from this kind of writing an argument of sufficient validity may be drawn to evince him to be the author of these epistles. Jerome was of another mind. Speaking of Didymus, "Imperitus," saith he, "sermone est, et non scientia, apostolicum virum ex ipso sermone exprimens, tam sensuum nomine quam simplicitate verborum." But seeing Ignatius was a Syrian, and near to martyrdom (though he writes his epistles from Troas and Smyrna, which, without doubt, were not in his way to Rome from Antioch, and yet everywhere he saith he is going to Rome: Ad Eph., Τὰ δεσμὰ ἀπὸ Συρίας μέχρι Ῥώμης περιτρέχω· which in the close he affirms he wrote from Smyrna, whither he was had to his martyrdom), what is it to any man what style he used in his writings, what swelling titles he gave to any, or words he made use of! Who shall call those writings (especially Ignatius being a Syrian) into question!

But perhaps some farther question may here arise (and which hath by sundry been already started) about the use of divers Latin words in these epistles, which, doubtless, cannot be handsomely laid on the same account, of their author being a Syrian, and nigh to martyrdom. Ἀκκέπτα, δεπόσιτα, δεσέρτωρ, ἐξεμπλάριον, are usually instanced in, words to whose use no Roman customs, observations, orders, nor rules of government, do administer the least occasion. Of these the doctor tells you he wonders only that in so many epistles there are no more of this kind. And why so? The epistles are not so large a volume, a very few hours will serve to read them over; and yet I am persuaded, that in all that compass of reading in the Greek fathers which our doctor owns, he cannot give so many instances of words barbarous to their language, no way occasioned by the means before mentioned, as have been given in these epistles. But he wonders there are no more, and some wonder that all are not of his mind! But he farther

informs us that a diligent reader of the Scripture may observe many more Latin words in the New Testament than are used in these epistles; and, for a proof of his diligence and observation, reckons up out of the end of Pasor's Lexicon sundry words of that kind made use of by the sacred writers. I fear, unto some men, this will scarce be an apology prevalent to the dismission of these epistles from under the censure of being at least foully corrupted. Of the whole collection of words of that sort made by Pasor, among which are those especially culled out by our doctor to confirm his observations, there is scarce one but either it is expressive of some Roman office, custom, money, order, or the like; words of which nature pass as proper names (as one of those mentioned by the doctor is, and no otherwise used in the New Testament) from one country and language to another, or are indeed of a pure Greek original, or at least were in common use in that age; neither of which can be spoken of the words above mentioned, used in the epistles, which were never used by any before or after them, nor is there any occasion imaginable why they should. "Parvas habent spes epistolæ, si tales habent." I would, indeed, gladly see a fair, candid, and ingenuous defensative of the style and manner of writing used in these epistles, departing so eminently from any thing that was customary in the writings of the men of those days, or is regular for men of any generation, in repetitions, affected compositions, barbarisms, rhyming expressions, and the like; for truly, notwithstanding any thing that hitherto I have been able to obtain for help in this kind, I am enforced to incline to Vedelius' answers to all the particular instances given of this nature, "This and that place are corrupted,—this is from Clemens' Constitutions, this from this or that tradition;" which, also, would much better free these epistles from the word *σιγῆς*, used in the sense whereunto it was applied by the Valentinians long after the death of Ignatius, than any other apology I have as yet seen for the securing of its abode in them.

It is not a little burdensome to the thoughts of sober and learned men to consider how frequently, causelessly, absurdly, in the midst of discourses quite of another nature and tendency, the author of these epistles, or somebody for him, breaks in upon the commendation of church officers, bishops and presbyters, exalting them with titles of honour to the greatest potentates on earth, and comparing them to God the Father and Son; whereas none of the sacred writers that went before him, nor any of those good and holy men who, as is supposed, followed after him, do hold the least communion or society with him. Ἀναγκαῖον οὖν ἐστιν, ὅσαπερ ποιεῖτε, ἄνευ τοῦ ἐπισκόπου μηδὲν πράττειν ὑμᾶς, Epist. ad Tral. [cap. ii.], whereunto is immediately subjoined that doctrine concerning deacons which will scarcely be thought to be exegetical of Acts vi. 1–6, Δεῖ δὲ καὶ τοὺς διακόνους ὄντας μυστηρίων Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ κατὰ πάντα τρόπον ἀρέσκειν· οὐ γὰρ βρωτῶν καὶ ποτῶν εἰσι διάκονοι, ἀλλά, etc. And Τί γάρ ἐστιν ἐπίσκοπος; ἀλλ' ἢ πάσης ἀρχῆς καὶ ἐξουσίας ἐπέκεινα πάντων κρατῶν, [cap. vii.] What the writer of this passage intended to make of a bishop well I know not; but thus he speaks of him, Epist. ad Magnes. [cap. iii.]: Πρέπον οὖν ἐστι καὶ ὑμᾶς ὑπακούειν τῷ ἐπισκόπῳ ὑμῶν· καὶ κατὰ μηδὲν αὐτῷ ἀντιλέγειν. Φοβερὸν γάρ ἐστι (as the apostle speaks concerning God, Heb. x. 27) τῷ τοιούτῳ ἀντιλέγειν. Thus, indeed, some would have it, who, to help the matter, have farther framed such an episcopacy as was never thought on by any in the days of Ignatius, as shall afterward be made evident. And in the same epistle this is somewhat uncouth and strange, [cap. vi. vii.]: Ἐνώθητε τῷ ἐπισκόπῳ, ὑποτασσόμενοι τῷ Θεῷ δι' αὐτοῦ ἐν Χριστῷ. Ὥσπερ οὖν ὁ Κύριος ἄνευ τοῦ Πα-

τρὸς οὐδὲν ποιεῖ, οὐ δύναμαι γὰρ, φησὶ, ποιεῖν ἀπ' ἐμαυτοῦ οὐδέν· οὕτω καὶ ὑμεῖς ἄνευ τοῦ ἐπισκόπου μηδὲ πρεσβύτερος, μηδὲ διάκονος, μηδὲ λαϊκός· μηδέ τι φαινέσθω ὑμῖν εὔλογον παρὰ τὴν ἐκείνου γνώμην. Whether the Lord Christ hath bound any such burden upon the shoulders of the saints I much question. Nor can I tell what to make of the comparison between God the Father and the bishop, Christ and the rest of the church, the whole sentence, in word and manner, being most remote from the least countenance from the sacred writings. Epist. ad Philadel. [cap. v.]: Οἱ πρεσβύτεροι καὶ οἱ διάκονοι καὶ ὁ λοιπος κλῆρος, ἅμα παντὶ τῷ λαῷ καὶ τοῖς στρατιώταις, καὶ τοῖς ἄρχουσι καὶ τῷ Καίσαρι (well aimed, however), τῷ ἐπισκόπῳ πειθαρχείτωσαν. The Epistle to the Church of Smyrna is full of such stuff, inserted without any occasion, order, coherence, or any colour to induce us to believe that it is part of the epistle as first written. One passage I may not omit [cap. ix.]: Τίμα, φησὶν, υἱε τὸν Θεὸν, καὶ βασιλέα· ἐγὼ δὲ φημι (in the language of our Saviour repudiating the Pharisees' corrupted glosses on the law), τίμα μὲν τὸν Θεὸν ὡς αἴτιον τῶν ὅλων καὶ Κύριον, ἐπίσκοπον δὲ ὡς ἀρχιερέα, Θεοῦ εἰκόνα φοροῦντα, κατὰ μὲν τὸ ἄρχειν, Θεοῦ, κατὰ δὲ τὸ ἱερατεύειν, Χριστοῦ· καὶ μετὰ τοῦτον τιμᾶν χρὴ καὶ βασιλέα. So Peter's mistake is corrected. His reasons follow: Οὔτε γὰρ Θεοῦ τις κρείττων, ἢ παραπλήσιος ἐν πᾶσι τοῖς οὖσιν· οὔτε δὲ ἐν ἐκκλησίᾳ ἐπισκόπου τι μεῖζον ἱερωμένου Θεῷ ὑπὲρ τῆς τοῦ κόσμου παντὸς σωτηρίας (as was Jesus Christ). And it is added: Εἰ γὰρ ὁ βασιλεῦσιν ἐπεγειρόμενος, κολάσεως ἄξιος δικαίως γενήσεται, ὡς γε παραλύων τὴν κοινὴν εὐνομίαν, πόσῳ δικαίτερ χείρονος ἀξιωθήσεται τιμωρίας ὁ ἄνευ ἐπισκόπου τι ποιεῖν προαιρούμενος; etc., Ἱερωσύνη γάρ ἐστι τὸ πάντων ἀγαθῶν ἐν ἀνθρώποις ἀναβεβηκός. How well this suits the doctrine of Peter and Paul the reader will easily discern. Cæsar or the king is, upon all accounts, thrust behind the bishop, who is said to be consecrated to God for the salvation of the world; him he is exhorted to obey;—and in express opposition to the Holy Ghost, the bishop's name is thrust in between God and the king, as in a way of pre-eminence above the latter; and to do any thing without the bishop is made a far greater crime than to rise up against the king. As this seems scarce to be the language of one going upon an accusation to appear before the emperor, so I am certain it is most remote from the likeness of any thing that in this affair we are instructed in from the Scripture. Plainly this language is the same with that of the false impostor, Pseudo-Clemens, in his pretended Apostolical Constitutions. At this rate, or somewhat beyond it, have you him ranting: Lib. ii. cap. ii., Ἐπίσκοπον Θεοῦ τύπον ἔχειν ἐν ἀνθρώποις, τῶν πάντων ἄρχειν ἀνθρώπων, ἱερέων, βασιλέων, ἀρχόντων, πατέρων, υἱῶν, διδασκάλων καὶ παιτων ὁμοῦ τῶν ὑπηκόων'—"All popes, all sorts of persons whatever, priests, kings, and princes, fathers and children, all under the feet of this exemplar of God and ruler of men!" a passage which, doubtless, eminently interprets and illustrates that place of Peter, 1 Epist. v. 1-3, "The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed; feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock." But yet, as if the man were stark mad with worldly pride and pomp, he afterward, in the name of the holy apostles of Jesus Christ, commands all the laity (forsooth) to honour, love, and fear the bishop ὡς κύριον, ὡς δεσπότην, ὡς ἀρχιερέα Θεοῦ, lib. ii. cap. xx. And that you may see whither the man drives, and what he aims at, after he hath set out his bishop like an emperor or an eastern king, in

all pomp and glory, he adds, Τοὺς ἐπισκόπους ἄρχοντας ὑμῶν καὶ βασιλέας ἡγεῖσθαι νομίζετε, καὶ δασμοὺς ὡς βασιλεῦσι προσφέρετε. The paying of tribute to them as kings is the issue of these descriptions, that they may have wherewithal to maintain their pomp and greatness, according to the institution of our Lord Jesus Christ and his blessed apostles! But I shall not rake farther into this dunghill, nor shall I add any more instances of this kind out of Ignatius, but close in one insisted on by our doctor for the proof of his episcopacy. Dissert. ii. cap. xxv, 7, saith he, Quartò, Τῷ ἐπισκόπῳ προσέχετε, ἵνα καὶ ὁ Θεὸς ὑμῖν. Ἀντίψυχον ἐγὼ τῶν ὑποτασσομένων τῷ ἐπισκόπῳ, πρεσβυτέροις καὶ διακόνοις. "Episcopo attendite, ut et vobis Deus attendat. Ego animam meam libenter eorum loco substitui cuperem quod Anglice optime dicimus" (my soul for theirs), "qui episcopo, presbyteris, et diaconis obsequuntur." I hope I may without great difficulty obtain the doctor's pardon, that I dare not be so bold with my soul as to jeopard it in that manner, especially being not mine own to dispose of.

Upon these and many more the like accounts do the epistles seem to me to be like the children that the Jews had by their strange wives, Neh. xiii. 23, 24, who spake part the language of Ashdod, and part the language of the Jews. As there are in them many footsteps of a gracious spirit, every way worthy of and becoming the great and holy personage whose they are esteemed, so there is evidently a mixture of the working of that worldly and carnal spirit which in his days was not so let loose as in after times. For what is there in the Scripture, what is in the genuine epistle of Clemens, that gives countenance to those descriptions of episcopacy, bishops, and the subjection to them, that are in these epistles (as now we have them) so insisted on? what titles are given to bishops? what sovereignty, power, rule, dominion, is ascribed to them? Is there any thing of the like nature in the writings of the apostles? in Clemens? the epistle of Polycarp, etc., or in any unquestionable legitimate offspring of any of the first worthies of Christianity? Whence have they their three orders of bishops, presbyters, and deacons, upon the distinct observation of which so much weight is laid? Is there any one word, iota, tittle, or syllable, in the whole book of God, giving countenance to any such distinctions? Eph. iv. 11, we have "pastors and teachers." Rom. xii. 7, 8, "Him that teacheth, him that exhorteth, him that ruleth, and him that showeth mercy." Phil. i. 1, we have "bishops and deacons;" and their institution, with the order of it, we have at large expressed, 1 Tim. iii. 1–13.—"Bishops and deacons," without the interposition of any other order whatever. Deacons we have appointed, Acts vi. 1–6; and elders, Acts. xiv. 23. Those who are *bishops* we find called *presbyters*, Tit. i. 5, 7; and those who are *presbyters* we find termed *bishops*, Acts xx. 28: so that deacons we know, and bishops who are presbyters, or presbyters who are bishops, we know; but bishops, presbyters, and deacons, as three distinct orders in the church, from the Scripture we know not. Neither did Clemens, in his Epistle to the Corinthians, know of any more than we do, which a few instances will manifest. Saith he, speaking of the apostles, Κατὰ χώρας οὖν καὶ πόλεις κηρύσσοντες, καθίστανον τὰς ἀπαρχὰς αὐτῶν, δοκιμάσαντες τῷ Πνεύματι, εἰς ἐπισκόπους καὶ διακόνους τῶν μελλόντων πιστεύειν· καὶ τοῦτο οὐ καινῶς, ἐκ γὰρ δὴ πολλῶν χρόνων ἐγέγραπτο περὶ ἐπισκόπων καὶ διακόνων, etc. Bishops and deacons (as in the church at Philippi) this man knows, but the third order he is utterly unacquainted withal. And that the difference of this man's expressions concerning church rulers from those in the epistle under consideration may the better appear, and that his asserting of bishops and

presbyters to be one and the same may the more clearly be evidenced, I shall transcribe one other passage from him, whose length I hope will be excused from the usefulness of it to the purpose in hand: Pages 57, 58, Καὶ οἱ ἀπόστολοι ἡμῶν ἐγνωσαν διὰ τοῦ Κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, ὅτι ἔρις ἔσται ἐπὶ τοῦ ὀνόματος τῆς ἐπισκοπῆς· διὰ ταύτην οὖν τὴν αἰτίαν, πρόγνωσιν εἰληφότες τελείαν, κατέστησαν τοὺς προειρημένους, καὶ μεταξὺ ἐπινομὴν δεδώκασιν, ὅπως, ἐὰν κοιμηθῶσιν, διαδέξωνται ἕτεροι δεδοκιμασμένοι ἄνδρες, τὴν λειτουργίαν αὐτῶν. Τοὺς οὖν κατασταθέντας ὑπ' ἐκείνων, ἢ μεταξὺ ὑφ' ἑτέρων ἐλλογίμων ἀνδρῶν, συνευδοκησάσης τῆς ἐκκλησίας πάσης, (for so, it seems, was the manner of the church in his days, that their officers were appointed by the consent of the whole church,) καὶ λειτουργήσαντας ἀμέμπτως τῷ ποιμνίῳ τοῦ Χριστοῦ μετὰ ταπεινοφροσύνης, ἡσύχως καὶ ἀβαναύσως, μεμαρτυρημένους τε πολλοῖς χρόνοις ὑπὸ πάντων, τούτους οὐ δικαίως νομίζομεν ἀποβαλέσθαι τῆς λειτουργίας· ἁμαρτία γὰρ οὐ μικρὰ ἡμῖν ἔσται, ἐὰν τοὺς ἀμέμπτως καὶ ὁσίως προσενέγκοντας τὰ δῶρα τῆς ἐπισκοπῆς ἀποβάλωμεν. Μακάριοι οἱ προοδοιπορήσαντες πρεσβύτεροι (or the bishops of whom he was speaking), οἵτινες ἔγκαρπον καὶ τελείαν ἔσχον τὴν ἀνάλυσιν, etc. And sundry other discoveries are there in that epistle of the like nature. It is not my design or purpose to insist upon the parity of bishops and presbyters, or rather the identity of office, denoted by sundry appellations, from these and the like places; this work is done to the full by Blondellus, so that our labour in this kind, were that the purpose in hand, is prevented. He that thinks the arguments of that learned man to this purpose are indeed answered thoroughly and removed by Dr H[ammond], in his fourth dissertation, where he proposes them to consideration, may one day think it needful to be able to distinguish between words and things. That Clemens owns in a church but two sorts of officers, the first whereof he calls sometimes bishops, sometimes presbyters, the other deacons, the doctor himself doth not deny.

That in the judgment of Clemens no more were instituted in the church is no less evident. And this carries the conviction of its truth so clearly with it that Lombard himself confesseth, "Hos solos ministrorum duos ordines ecclesiam primitivam habuisse, et de his solis præceptum apostoli nos habere," lib. iv. Sen. D. 24. It seems, moreover, that those bishops and deacons in those days, as was observed, were appointed to the office by and with the consent of the people, or whole body of the church; no less do these words import, Συνευδοκησάσης τῆς ἐκκλησίας πάσης. Our doctor, indeed, renders these words, "Applaudente aut congratulante ecclesia tota;" and adds (satis pro imperio) "nihil hic de acceptatione totius ecclesiæ, sine qua episcopos et diaconos ab apostolis et apostolicis viris constitutos non esse, ex hoc loco concludit Blondellus, quasi, qui ex Dei jussu et approbatione constituebantur, populi etiam acceptatione indigere putandi essent," Dissert. iv. cap. vii. 8, 10. And who dares take that confidence upon him as to affirm any more what so great a doctor hath denied! Though the scope of the place, the nature of the thing, and first most common sense of the word here used, be willingly to consent (as it is also used in the Scripture, for the most part, Acts viii. 1, 1 Cor. vii. 12) to a thing to be done, or to the doing of it, yet here it must be taken to applaud or congratulate, or what else our doctor pleases, because he will have it so. Ἐλλόγιμοι ἄνδρες, also, must be "viri apostolici," men with apostolical or extraordinary power, when they are only the choice men of the church where such a constitution of officers is had that are intended, because it is to our doctor's purpose to have the words so rendered. "Ex jussu Dei et approbatione" is added, as though any particular command or approbation of God were intimated for the constitution of the bishops

and deacons mentioned, beyond the institution of the Lord Jesus Christ that elders should be ordained in every church; because this is, it seems, to be exclusive wholly of the consent of the people, as any way needful or required to their constitution; which yet, as it is practically false, no such thing being mentioned by Clemens, who recounteth the ways and means whereby officers were continued in the church even after the decease of the apostles and those first ordained by them to that holy employment, so also is it argumentatively weak and unconcluding. God appointed, designed Saul to be king, approving of his so being, and yet he would have the people come together to choose him: so also was it in the case of David. Though the apostles, in the name and by the authority of God, appointed the deacons of the church at Jerusalem, yet they would have the whole church look out among themselves the men to be appointed. And that the ordaining of the elders was with the people's election, Acts xiv. 23, it will ere long be manifested that neither our doctor nor any of his associates have as yet disproved. This poor thing "the people," being the peculiar people of Christ, the heritage of God, and holy temple unto him, etc., will one day be found to be another manner of thing than many of our great doctors have supposed. But he informs us, cap. iv. sect. 3, from that testimony which we cited before, that the apostles in the appointment of bishops and deacons (for so the words expressly are) are said τῷ Πνεύματι δοκιμάσαι,—that is, saith he, "Revelationibus edoctos esse, quibus demum hæc dignitas communicanda esset;" that is, that they appointed those whom God revealed to them in an extraordinary manner to be so ordained, and this is the meaning of τῷ Πνεύματι δοκιμάσαντες. And why so? The Holy Ghost orders concerning the appointment of deacons δοκιμαζέσθωσαν πρῶτον, 1 Tim. iii. 10. That those who are to be taken into office and power in the church had need first to be tried and approved is granted, and this work the apostles give to the multitude of the church, Acts vi. 3;—where yet, after the people's election, and the apostles' approbation, and the trial by both, one that was chosen is supposed to have proved none of the best; and yet of him and them are the apostles said by Clemens that they did τῷ Πνεύματι δοκιμάσαι. But how shall it be made to appear that "Spiritu probantes," trying or proving by the Spirit, or spiritually proving them, to try whether they were able ministers of the new testament, not of the letter but of the Spirit, proving them by that Spirit which was promised unto them "to lead them into all truth," must needs signify they were taught whom they should appoint by immediate revelation? To prove by the Spirit, or spiritually, the persons that are to be made ministers or bishops, is to have their names revealed to us! Stephen is said to speak ἐν τῷ Πνεύματι, Acts vi. 10; and Paul purposed ἐν τῷ Πνεύματι, Acts xix. 21; and we are said to serve God ἐν τῷ Πνεύματι, Gal. v. 5; and to make supplication ἐν τῷ Πνεύματι, Eph. vi. 18; with many more expressions of the like nature. Does all this relate to immediate revelation, and are all things done thereby which we are said to do in the Spirit? Before we were instructed in this mystery, and were informed that δοκιμάσαντες τῷ Πνεύματι did signify to be "taught by revelation," we had thought that the expression of doing any thing τῷ Πνεύματι had manifested the assistance, guidance, and direction, which for the doing of it we receive by the holy and blessed Spirit of God, promised unto us, and bestowed on, in, and through the Lord Jesus Christ. Yea, but he adds that it is also spoken of the apostles, πρόγνωσιν *præcognitionem*, that is, *revelationem* εἰληχότες τελείαν, they appointed them bishops and deacons; by the help and presence of the Spirit with them the apostles examined and

tried those who were to be appointed bishops, so obtaining and receiving a perfect foreknowledge, or knowledge of them before their admission into office. This also expresses revelation (*προγνωσιν εἰληφότες*), upon trial it was revealed unto them! and so must any thing else be allowed to be that our doctor will have to be so, now he is asserting to that purpose. But had the *ἐλλόγιμοι ἄνδρες* who appointed bishops and deacons after the apostles' time, had they also this special revelation? or may they not be said *δοκιμάσαι τῷ Πνεύματι*; If not, how will you look upon them under the notion of *ἐλλογίμων ἀνδρῶν* who neglected so great a duty? If they did, let us know when this way of constituting church officers by immediate revelation ceased, and what was afterward taken up in the room thereof, and who they were that first proceeded on another account, and on what authority they did so. There is a generation of men in the world which will thank the doctor for this insinuation, and will tie knots upon it that will trouble him to loose.

Before we return, let us look but a little farther, and we shall have a little more light given us into what was the condition and power of the people in the church in the days of Clemens. Speaking of them who occasioned the division and schism in the church of Corinth, or them about whose exaltation into office, or dejection from it, that sad difference fell out, he gives them this advice: *Τίς οὖν ἐν ὑμῖν γενναῖος; τίς εὔσπλαγχνος; τίς πεπληρωμένος ἀγάπης; εἰπάτω· Εἰ δι' ἐμὲ στάσις, καὶ ἔρις, καὶ σχίσματα, ἐκχωρῶ, ἄπειμι οὗ ἐὰν βούλησθε, καὶ ποιῶ τὰ προσταττόμενα ὑπὸ τοῦ πλήθους· μόνον τὸ ποίμνιον τοῦ Χριστοῦ εἰρηνευέτω, μετὰ τῶν καθεσταμένων πρεσβυτέρων.* It seems the *πλῆθος*, the multitude, or the people, were not such poor, inconsiderable things as they are reported to be, when he advises them to stop and stay the sedition, by yielding obedience to the things by them appointed and commanded. If it were in itself evil, disorderly, and not according to the mind of Christ, that the people should order and appoint things in the church, it had been simply evil for Clemens to have advised any to yield obedience unto things by them so appointed. Where is now Ignatius' *ὑποτάσσεσθε τῷ ἐπισκόπῳ* and *χωρὶς ἐπισκοποῦ*, etc.? Even those who are contending about rule and government in the church are advised to stand to the determination of the people, and to cry, *Τὰ προστασσόμενα ὑπὸ τοῦ πλήθους ποιοῦμεν.* This is also insisted on by Blondellus, who thence argues "potestatem plebis circa sacra." Dissert. v. cap. viii. sect. 4, "Ad verba hæc," saith our doctor, "prodigii instar est quod notandum duxit Dav. Blondellus potestatem plebis circa sacra (de qua tandem integram dissertationem elucubravit) artificiis quibuscunque asserturus. Hic (inquit) nos monet Clemens fideles etiam de episcopatu aut presbyterio contendentes, non ab episcopi singulari *καὶ ὑπερέχοντος* nutu, sed a multitudinis præceptis pependisse." But let not our doctor be angry, nor cry out so fast of prodigies; a little time will manifest that many things may not be prodigious, which yet are contrary to sundry of his conceptions and apprehensions. I cannot but acknowledge him to be provoked; but withal must say, that I have found very commonly that reasons ushered in by such loud clamours have, on examination, proved to have stood in need of some such noises as might fright men from the consideration of them. What is in the next sections set up to shield the children of episcopacy from being affrighted with this prodigy may perhaps be of more efficacy thereunto than the exclamations before mentioned; he therefore proceeds, sect. 5. "Certe," saith he, "si serio rem ageret Dav. Blondellus de presbyteris suis (non de episcopis nostris) actum plane et triumphatum erit, nec enim ab universo aliquo presbyterorum collegio,

quod ille tam afflictim ardet, sed a multitudinis solius arbitrio, tum contendentes de episcopo, tum fideles omnes Corinthios pepen lisse æque concludendum erit." If any man in the world hath manifested more desperate affection towards presbytery than this doctor hath done towards episcopacy, for my part *solus habeto*. But though neither Clemens nor Blondellus speaks any one word about the ordering of things "multitudinis solius arbitrio," yet here is that said by them both which is sufficiently destructive, not only to the episcopacy the doctor contends for, as a thing wholly inconsistent with the power and liberty here granted the people, but of any such presbytery also as shall undertake the ordering and disposing of things in the church of God without the consent and concurrent suffrage of the people. Such a presbytery, it seems, Blondellus does not defend. But yet neither the doctor's outery as at a prodigy, nor this retortion upon presbytery is any answer to the testimony of Clemens, nor, indeed, is there the least possible reflection upon an orderly gospel presbytery in any church and over it by what Clemens here professeth to be the power of the people; all the appearance of any such thing is from the term "solius," foisted into the discourse of Blondellus by the doctor, in his taking of it up to retort at. Clemens in the very next words secures us from any thought that all things depended "a multitudinis solius arbitrio." His very next words are, Μόνον τὸ ποίμνιον τοῦ Χριστοῦ εἰρηνευέτω, μετὰ τῶν καθεσταμένων πρεσβυτέρων. Our doctors and masters (having stuffed their imaginations with the shape and lineament of that hierarchical fabric which the craft, policy, subtlety, avarice, pride, and ambition, of many ages successively had formed and framed according to the pattern they saw in the mount of the world and the governments therein), upon the first hearing of a church, a flock of Christ, walking in orderly subjection to their own elders, concurring with them and consenting to them in their rule and government, instantly, as men amazed, cry out, "A prodigy!" It is not imaginable into what ridiculous, contemptible miscarriages, pride, prejudice, and self-fulness, do oftentimes betray men, otherwise of good abilities in their ways and very commendable industry.

But, sect. 6, the doctor comes closer, and gives his reason why this testimony of Clemens is not of any efficacy to the purpose in hand. Saith he, "At quis (sodes) a fidelibus de episcopatu (ut vis) contra ipsos ab apostolis constitutos episcopos contendentibus; quis a populo contra principem suum tumultus ciente; quis verbis ad retundendum seditionem ad plebem factis, argumenta ad authoritatem populo adjudicandum, principi derogandum duci posse existimavit?" Though many words follow in the next section, yet this is all of answer that is given to this signal testimony of Clemens. I know the doctor, for the most part, meets not only with favourable readers, but also partial admirers, or else, certainly, his exclamation would scarce pass for an invincible argument, nor such rhetorical diversions as this be esteemed solid answers. There is not by Blondellus any argument taken from the faithful's tumultuating against the bishops (that "If appointed by the apostles," which is thrust in, taken for the persons of those bishops, is against the express testimony of Clemens in this epistle), nor from the people's seditiously rebelling against their prince, nor from any word spoken to the people to repress their sedition; neither was any thing of this nature urged in the least by Blondellus; nor is there any colour given to such a collection from any thing in the words cited from the epistle or the context of them. It is the advice of the church of Rome to the persons (whether already in office or aspiring thereunto) about whom the contention and division was in the church of Corinth that

is insisted on. It is not the words or plea of them who were in disorder. There is not any reprehension given to the body of the church, the multitude, or people, who are supposed to tumultuate, to quiet them, but a direction given, as was said, by the church of Rome to the persons that occasioned the difference, how to behave themselves, so that a timely issue might be put to the division of the church. To this end are they advised to observe the προστάγματα, the orders, precepts, decrees, or appointments, of "the multitude," as, from Acts xv. 12, the body of the church is called. It is not that they should yield to their tumultuating, but yield obedience to their orderly precepts. Τὰ προστασσόμενα ὑπὸ τοῦ πλήθους are by him approved; and had it not been lawful for them with the presbyters προστάττειν in the affairs of the church, Clemens, writing this epistle to the whole church, could not possibly have led them into a greater snare.

It is a sad thing to consider the pitiful entanglements and snares that some men run into, who will undertake to make good what they have once engaged for, let what will come against them.

To return, then: it is evident that in the time of Clemens there were but two sorts of officers in the church, bishops and deacons; whereas the epistles of Ignatius do precisely, in every place where any mention is made of them (as there is upon occasions and upon none at all), insist on three orders, distinct in name and things. With Clemens it is not so. Those whom he calls bishops in one place, the very same persons he immediately calls presbyters, after the example of Paul, Acts xx. 28, Tit. i. 5, 7, and plainly asserts episcopacy to be the office of presbyters. Ἁμαρτία, saith he, οὐ μικρὰ ἡμῖν ἔσται ἐὰν τοὺς ἀμέμπτως καὶ ὁσίως προσενέγκοντας τὰ δῶρα τῆς ἐπισκοπῆς ἀποβάλωμεν. Μακάριοι οἱ προοδοιποροῦντες πρεσβύτεροι,—namely, because they were in no danger to be cast from their episcopacy. And whereas the fault which he reproves in the church of Corinth is their division, and want of due subjection to their spiritual governors, according to the order which Christ hath appointed in all the churches of the saints, he affirms plainly that those governors were the presbyters of the church: Αἰσχρὰ, saith he, καὶ λίαν αἰσχρὰ, καὶ ἀνάξια τῆς ἐν Χριστῷ ἀγωγῆς ἀκούεται, τὴν βεβαιοτάτην, καὶ ἀρχαίαν Κορινθίων ἐκκλησίαν, δι' ἓν ἢ δύο πρόσωπα, στασιάζειν πρὸς τοὺς πρεσβυτέρους. And in all places throughout the whole epistle, writing ἐκκλησίᾳ τοῦ Θεοῦ παροικούσῃ Κόρινθον, to that particular church of Corinth, the saints dwelling there, walking in the order and fellowship of the gospel, where he treats of those things, he still intimates a plurality of presbyters in the church (as there may, nay, there ought to be, in every single congregation, Acts xx. 28), without the least intimation of any singular person promoted, upon any account whatever, above his fellows. So in the advice given to the persons who occasioned the division before mentioned, Μόνον τὸ ποίμνιον τοῦ Χριστοῦ εἰρηνευέτω, μετὰ τῶν καθισταμένων πρεσβυτέρων. Had there been a singular bishop at Corinth, much more a metropolitan, such as our doctor speaks him to have been, it had been impossible that he should be thus passed by in silence.

But the doctor gives you a double answer to this observation, with the several parts whereof I doubt not but that he makes himself merry, if he can suppose that any men are so wedded to his dictates as to give them entertainment; for indeed they are plainly jocular. But learned men must have leave sometimes to exercise their fancies, and to sport themselves with their own imaginations.

First, then, for the mention that is made of many presbyters in the church of Corinth, to whom Clemens, in the name of the church of Rome, exhorts to give all due respect, honour, obedience: He tells you that by "The

church of Corinth," all the churches of Achaia are meant and intended. The epistle is directed only Τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ τοῦ Θεοῦ παροικούσῃ Κόρινθον, without the least intimation of any other church or churches. The difference it is written about was occasioned by one or two persons in that church only; it is that church alone that is exhorted to order and due subjection to their elders. From the beginning to the end of the epistle, there is not one word, apex, or tittle, to intimate the designation of it to any church or churches beyond the single church of Corinth, or that they had any concernment in the difference spoken to. The fabric of after ages lies so close to the doctor's imagination that there is no entrance for the true frame of the primitive church of Christ; and therefore every thing must be wrested and apportioned to the conceit of such an episcopacy as he hath entertained. Whereas he ought to crop off both head and heels of his own imagination, and the episcopacy of the latter days, which he too dearly affects, he chooseth rather to stretch and torture the ancient government of the church, that it may seem to answer the frame presently contended for. But let us a little attend to the doctor's learned arguments, whereby he endeavours to make good his assertion:—

1. He tells you that Corinth was the chief city of Achaia, the metropolis (in a political sense and acceptation of the word) of Greece, where the proconsul had his residence, Dissert. v. cap. ii. sect. 3. Let us grant this to our learned doctor, lest we should find nothing to gratify him withal; what then will follow? Hence, saith he, it will follow, sect. 4, that this epistle which was sent, "Ecclesiæ παροικούσῃ Κόρινθον, non ad unius civitatis ecclesiam, sed ad omnes totius Achaiæ Christianos, per singulas civitates et regiones, sub episcopis aut præfectis suis ubique collocatas missa existimetur." But pray, doctor, why so? We poor creatures, who are not so sharp-sighted as to discern a metropolitan archbishop at Corinth, on whom all the bishops in Greece were dependent, nor can find any instituted church in the Scripture or in Clemens of one denomination beyond a single congregation, cannot but think that all the strength of this consectary, from the insinuation of such a state of things in the church of God, is nothing but a pure begging of the thing in question, which will never be granted upon such terms.

Yea, but he adds, sect. 5, that "Paul wrote his epistle not only to the church of Corinth, but also to all the churches of Achaia; therefore Clemens did so also." At first view this argument seems not very conclusive, yea, appears, indeed, very ridiculous. The enforcement of it which ensues may perhaps give new life and vigour to it. How, then, is it proved that Paul wrote not only to the church of Corinth, but to all them in Achaia also? Why, saith he, in the second epistle, chap. i. verse 1, it is so expressed. He writes, Τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ τοῦ Θεοῦ τῇ οὔσῃ ἐν Κορίνθῳ, σὺν τοῖς ἁγίοις πᾶσι τοῖς οὖσιν ἐν ὅλῃ τῇ Ἀχαΐᾳ. Very good. It is indisputably evident that Paul wrote his second epistle to the church at Corinth and all the rest of Achaia, for he expressly affirms himself so to do; and for the first epistle, it is directed not only to the church of Corinth, chap. i., verse 2, but also πᾶσι τοῖς ἐπικαλουμένοις τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ Κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ ἐν παντὶ τόπῳ, —that is, saith our doctor, in the whole region of Achaia! So, indeed, says the doctor's great friend, Grotius, to whom he is beholden for more than one rare notion. I say it not in any way of any reproach to the doctor, only I cannot but think his careful warding of himself against the thoughts of men that he should be beholden to Grotius doth exceedingly unbecome the doctor's gravity and self-denial. This is complained of by some who have tried it in reference to his late comment on the Revelation. And

in this Dissertation he is put by his own thoughts (I will not say guilty) to an apology, cap. i. sect. 24: "Qua in re suffragium suum tulisse Hugonem Grotium τὸν πάνυ ex annotationibus posthumis, nuper editis, et postquam hæc omnia typographo transcripta essent, cursim perlectis edoctum gratulor." Let not the reader think that Dr Hammond had transmitted his papers full of rare conjectures to the printer before Grotius' Annotations upon the Revelation were published, but only before he had read them. The doctor little thinks what a fly this is in his pot of ointment, nor how indecent with all impartial men such apologies, subservient to a frame of spirit in bondage to a man's own esteem and reputation, appear to be. But let this pass, and let the saints that call upon the name of Jesus Christ in every place be the saints in every part of Achaia,—though the epistle itself (written, indeed, upon occasion taken from the church of Corinth, yet) was given by inspiration from God for the use not only of all the saints in the whole world at that time wherein it was written, but of all those who were to believe in any part or place of the world to the end thereof,—although the assertion of it be not built on any tolerable conjecture, but may be rejected with the same facility wherewith it is tendered, what now will hence ensue? Why, hence it follows that Clemens also wrote his epistle to all the churches in Achaia. Very good! Paul writing an epistle entitled chiefly to the Corinthians, expressly and ἐητῶς directs it to the saints or churches of Achaia, yea, to all that call upon the name of God in every place, so that his epistle, being of catholic concernment, is not to be confined to the church of Corinth only, although most of the particular things mentioned in that epistle related only to that particular church; therefore, Clemens directing his epistle to the church of Corinth only, not once mentioning nor insinuating an intention of extending it to any other, handling in it only the peculiar concernment of that church, and a difference about one or two persons therein, must be supposed to have written to all the churches of Achaia! And if such arguments as these will not prove episcopacy to be of apostolical constitution, what will prevail with men so to esteem it!

——— "Si Pergama dextrâ
Defendi possent, etiam hac defensa fuissent."—Æn. ii. 291, 292.

And this is the cause of naming many elders or presbyters in one church! For my part, I suppose the doctor might more probably have adhered to a former conjecture of his, Dissert. iv. cap. x. sect. 9. Concerning two sundry different churches, where were distinct officers, in the same city, "Primo," saith he, "respondeo non usque quaque verum est, quod pro concesso sumitur, quamvis enim in una ecclesia aut cætu plures simul episcopi nunquam fuerint" (pray except them mentioned Acts xx. 28, and those Acts xiv. 23), "nihil tamen obstare quin in eadem civitate duo aliquando cætus disterminati fuerint." He might, I say, with more show of probability have abode by this observation than to have rambled over all Greece to relieve himself against his adversaries. But yet neither would this suffice. What use may or will be made of this concession shall elsewhere be manifested.

But the doctor hath yet another answer to this multiplication of elders, and the mention of them with deacons, with the evident identity that is between them and bishops through the whole epistle, the same persons being unquestionably intended, in respect of the same office, by both these appellations. Now, this second answer is founded upon the supposition of the former (a goodly foundation!)—namely, that the epistle under consideration was written and sent not to the church of Corinth only, but to all the churches of Achaia, of which Corinth was the metropolitan.

2. Now, this second answer is, that *the elders or presbyters here mentioned were properly those whom he calls bishops*, diocesans,—men of a third rank and order, above deacons and presbyters in the church administrations and government; and for those who are properly called presbyters, there were then none in the church. To give colour to this miserable evasion, Dissert. iv. cap. x. sect. 11, he discourseth about the government and ordering of church affairs by bishops and deacons in some churches that were small, not yet formed or completed, nor come to perfection at the first planting of them. How well this is accommodated to the church of Corinth, which Clemens calls βεβαιοτατην και αρχαιαν, and which himself would have to be a metropolitical church, being confessedly great, numerous, furnished with great and large gifts and abilities, may be seen with half an eye. How ill, also, this shift is accommodated to help in the case for whose service it was first invented, is no less evident. It was to save the sword of Phil. i. 1 from the throat of the episcopacy he contendeth for. That epistle is directed to the saints or church at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons. Two things do here trouble our doctor:—(1.) The mention of more bishops than one at Philippi; (2.) The knitting together of bishops and deacons, as the only two orders in the church, bringing down episcopacy one degree at least from that height whereto he would exalt it. For the first of these, he tells you that Philippi was the metropolitan church of the province of Macedonia; that the rest of the churches, which had every one their several bishops (diocesan we must suppose), were all comprised in the mentioning of Philippi: so that though the epistle be precisely directed τοῖς ἁγίοις τοῖς οὖσιν ἐν Φιλίπποις, yet the bishops that were with them must be supposed to be bishops of the whole province of Macedonia, because the church of Philippi was the metropolitan. The whole country must have been supposed to be converted, (and who that knows any thing of antiquity will dispute that!) and so divided with diocesans, as England of late was, the archbishop's see being at Philippi. But how came it then to pass that there is mention made of bishops and deacons only, without any one word of a third order, or rank of men distinct from them, called presbyters or elders? To this he answers, secondly, that when the church was first planted, before any great number was converted, or any fit to be made presbyters, there were only those two orders instituted, bishops and deacons: so that this church at Philippi seems to have been a metropolitical infant! The truth is, if ever the doctor be put upon reconciling the contradictions of his answers one to another, not only in this, but almost in every particular he deals withal (an entanglement which he is thrown into by his bold and groundless conjectures), he will find it to be as endless as fruitless; but it is not my present business to interpose in his quarrels, either with himself or presbytery. As to the matter under consideration, I desire only to be resolved in these few queries:—

1. If there were in the times of Clemens no presbyters in the churches, not [even] in so great and flourishing a church as that of Corinth, and if all the places in the Scripture where there is mention of elders do precisely intend bishops, in a distinction from them who are only deacons and not bishops also, as he asserts, when, by whom, and by what authority, were elders who are only so, *inferior to bishops* peculiarly so termed, instituted and appointed in the churches? And how comes it to pass that there is such express mention made of the office of deacons, and the continuance of it,—none at all of elders, who are acknowledged to be superior to them, and on whose shoulders in all their own churches lies the great weight and burden of all ecclesiastical administrations? As we say of their bishops,

so shall we of any presbyters not instituted and appointed by the authority of Jesus Christ in the church, "Let them go to the place from whence they came."

2. I desire the doctor to inform me in what sense he would have me to understand him, Dissert. ii. cap. xxix. sect. 21, 22, where he disputes that these words of Jerome, "Antequam studia in religione fierent, et diceretur in populis, ego sum Pauli, ego Cephæ, communi presbyterorum consensu ecclesiæ gubernabantur," are to be understood of the times of the apostles, when the first schism was in the church of Corinth, when it seems that neither then nor a good while after was there any such thing as presbyters in the church of Corinth, nor in any other church as we can hear of; as also, to tell us whether all those presbyters were bishops properly so called, distinct from elders who are only so, out of whom one man is chosen to be a bishop properly so called. To these inquiries I shall only add,—

3. That whereas in the Scripture we find clearly but two sorts of church-officers mentioned, as also in this epistle of Clemens, the third, that was afterward introduced, be it what it will, or fall on whom it will, *that* we oppose. This, saith the doctor, is that of presbytery. Give us churches instituted according to the word of Christ; give us in every church bishops and deacons (rather than we will quarrel, give us a bishop and deacons); let those bishops attend the particular flock over which they are appointed, preaching the word and administering the holy ordinances of the gospel in and to their own flock,—and I dare undertake for all the contenders for presbytery in this nation, and much more for the Independents, that there shall be an end of this quarrel; that they will not strive with the doctor, nor any living, for the introduction of any third sort of persons (though they should be called presbyters) into church office and government. Only this I must add, that the Scripture more frequently terms this second sort of men elders and presbyters than it doth bishops; and that word having been appropriated to a third sort peculiarly, we desire leave of the doctor and his associates if we also most frequently call them so, no ways declining the other appellation of bishops, so that it may be applied to signify the second, and not a third, rank of men. But of this whole business, with the nature, constitution, and frame, of the first churches, and the sad mistakes that men have, by their own prejudices, been engaged into in their delineation of them, a fuller opportunity, if God will, may ere long be afforded.

To return, then, to our Ignatius: Even upon this consideration of the difference that is between the epistles ascribed to him and the writings of *one of the same time with him*, or not long before him, as to their language and expression about church order and officers, it is evident that there hath been ill-favoured tampering with them, by them who thought to avail themselves of his authority for the asserting of that which never came into his mind.

As I intimated before, I have not insisted on any of those things, nor do on them altogether, with the like that may be added, as a sufficient foundation for the total rejection of those epistles which go under the name of Ignatius. There is in some of them a sweet and gracious spirit of faith, love, holiness, zeal for God, becoming so excellent and holy a witness of Christ as he was, evidently breathing and working. Neither is there any need at all that, for the defence of our hypothesis concerning the non-institution of any church-officer whatever relating to more churches in his office, or any other church, than a single particular congregation,

we should so reject them; for although many passages usually insisted on, and carefully collected by Dr Hammond for the proof of such an episcopacy to have been received by them of old as is now contended for, are exceedingly remote from the way and manner of the expression of those things used by the divine writers, with them also that followed after, both before, as hath been manifested, and some while after the days of Ignatius, as might be farther clearly evinced, and are thrust into the series of the discourse with such an incoherent impertinency as proclaims an interpolation, being some of them also very ridiculous, and so foolishly hyperbolical that they fall very little short of blasphemies, yet there are expressions in all or most of them that will abundantly manifest that he who was their author (whoever he was) never dreamt of any such fabric of church-order as in after ages was insensibly reared. Men who are full of their own apprehensions, begotten in them by such representations of things as either their desired presence hath exhibited to their mind or any after-prejudicate presumption hath possessed them with, are apt, upon the least appearance of any likeness unto that church they fancy, to imagine that they see the face and all the lineaments thereof, when, upon due examination, it will be easily discovered that there is not indeed the least resemblance between what they find in, and what they bring to, the authors in and of whom they make their inquiry. The Papists, having hatched and owned by several degrees that monstrous figment of transubstantiation (to instance among many in that abomination),—a folly destructive to whatever is in us as being living creatures, men, or Christians, or whatever by sense, reason, or religion, we are furnished withal, offering violence to us in what we hear, in what we see with our eyes and look upon, in what our hands do handle, and our palates taste, breaking in upon our understandings with vagrant, flying forms, self-subsisting accidents, with as many express contradictions on sundry accounts as the nature of things is capable of relation unto, attended with more gross idolatry than that of the poor naked Indians who fall down and worship a piece of red cloth, or of those who first adore their gods and then correct them,—do yet upon the discovery of any expressions among the ancients which they now make use of quite to another end and purpose than they did who first ventured upon them, having minds filled with their own abominations, presently cry out and triumph, as if they had found the whole fardel of the mass in its perfect dress, and their *breaden god* in the midst of it. It is no otherwise in the case of episcopacy. Men of these latter generations, from what they saw in present being, and that usefulness of it to all their desires and interests, having entertained thoughts of love to it and delight in it, searching antiquity, not to instruct them in the truth, but to establish their prejudicate opinion received by tradition from their fathers, and to consult them with whom they have to do, whatever expressions they find or can hear of that fall in, as to the sound of words, with what is now insisted upon, instantly they cry out, "Vicimus Io Pæan!" What a simple generation of Presbyters and Independents have we, that are ignorant of all antiquity, or do not understand what they read and look upon! Hence, if we will not believe that in Ignatius' days there were many parish churches, with their single priests, in subordination to a diocesan bishop, either immediately or by the interposed power of a *chore-episcopus*, and the like; and those diocesans, again, in the precincts of provinces, laid in a due subjection to their metropolitans, who took care of them as they of their parish priests; every individual church having no officer but a presbyter; every diocesan church having no presbyter, but a bishop; and every metro-

politan church having neither presbyter nor bishop properly related unto it as such, but an archbishop,—we are worse than infidels! Truly I cannot but wonder whether it doth not sometimes enter into these men's thoughts to apprehend how contemptible they are in their proofs for the fathering of such an ecclesiastical distribution of governors and government, as undeniably lackeyed after the civil divisions and constitutions of the times and places wherein it was introduced, upon those holy persons, whose souls never once entered into the secrets thereof.

Thus fares it with our doctor and his Ignatius: Οὐκ ἴδεν, ἀλλ' ἐδόκησεν ἰδεῖν διὰ νύκτα σελήνην. I shall only crave leave to say to him as Augustus of Quintilius Varus, upon the loss of his legions in Germany under his command, "Quintili Vare, redde legiones. Domine doctor, redde ecclesias." Give us the churches of Christ, such as they were in the days of the apostles, and down to Ignatius, though before that time (if Hegesippus may be believed) somewhat defloured, and our contest about church officers and government will be nearer at an end than perhaps you will readily imagine. Give us a church all whose members are holy, called, sanctified, justified, living stones, temples for the Holy Ghost, saints, believers, united to Christ the head by the Spirit that is given to them and dwelleth in them; a church whose πλῆθος is ὅπου ἂν φανῇ ὁ ἐπίσκοπος, that doth nothing by its members apart, that appertains to church-order, but when it is gathered ἐπὶ τὸ αὐτό· a church that being so gathered together in one place, σπουδάζει πάντα πράσσειν ἐν ὁμονοίᾳ Θεοῦ, προκαθημένου τοῦ ἐπισκόπου, acting in church things, in its whole body, under the rule and presidence of its officers; a church walking in order, and not as some, who ἐπίσκοπον μὲν καλοῦσιν, χωρὶς δὲ αὐτοῦ πάντα πράσσουσιν (of whom, saith Ignatius, οἵ τοιοῦτοι οὐκ εὐσυνείδητοι μὲν εἶναι φαίνονται, διὰ μὲν τὸ μὴ βεβαίως κατ' ἐντολὴν συναθροίζεσθαι, such as calling the bishop to the assemblies, yet do all things without him,—the manner of some in our days,—he supposeth not to keep the assemblies according to the command of Christ); —give us, I say, such a church, and let us come to them when they are πάντες ἐπὶ τὸ αὐτὸ, ἐν τῇ προσευχῇ ἅμα συναχθέντες, such as the churches in the days of Ignatius appear to have been, and are so rendered in the quotations taken from his epistles by the learned doctor for the confirmation of episcopacy, and, as I said before, the contest of this present digression will quickly draw to an issue. Being unwilling to go too far out of my way, I shall not,—

1. Consider the severals instanced in for the proof of episcopacy by the doctor. Seeing undeniably the interpretation must follow and be proportioned by the general issue of that state of the church in the days wherein those epistles were writ, or are pretended so to be, if that appear to be such as I have mentioned, I presume the doctor himself will confess that his witnesses speak not one word to his business, for whose confirmation he doth produce them. Nor,—

2. Shall I insist upon the degeneration of the institutions and appointments of Jesus Christ concerning church administrations, in the management of the succeeding churches, as principled and spirited by the operative and efficacious mystery of iniquity, occasioned and advantaged by the accommodation of ecclesiastical affairs to the civil distributions and allotments of the political state of things in those days. Nor,—

3. Insist much farther on the exceeding dissimilitude and unconformity that is between the expressions concerning church officers and affairs in these epistles (whencesoever they come), and those in the writings of unquestionable credit immediately before and after them, as also the utter

silence of the Scripture in those things wherewith they so abound. The Epistle of Clemens, of which mention was made before, was written for the composing and quieting of a division and distemper that was fallen out in the church of Corinth. Of the cause of that dissension that then miserably rent that congregation, he informs us in that complaint that some οὐ δικαίως ἀποβαλέσθαι τῆς λειτουργίας, were wrongfully cast from the ministry by the multitude: and he tells you that these were good, honest men, and faithful in the discharge of their duty; for saith he, Ὀφῶμεν ὅτι ἐνίους ὑμεῖς μετηγάγετε, καλῶς πολιτευομένους, ἐκ τῆς ἀμέμπτως αὐτοῖς τετιμημένης λειτουργίας, though they were unblamable both in their conversation and ministry, yet they removed them from their office. To reprove this evil, to convince them of the sinfulness of it, to reduce them to a right understanding of their duty and order, walking in the fellowship of the gospel, what course doth he proceed in? what arguments doth he use? He minds them of one God, one Christ, one body, one faith; tells them that wicked men alone use such ways and practices; bids them read the epistle of Paul, formerly written to them upon occasion of another division, and to be subject to their own elders, and all of them to leave off contending, quietly doing the things which the people, or the body of the church, delivered and commanded. Now, had this person, writing on this occasion, using all sorts of arguments, artificial or inartificial, for his purpose, been baptized into the opinion and esteem of a single episcopal superintendent, —whose exaltation seems to be the design of much which is said in the epistles of Ignatius, in the sense wherein his words are usually taken,— and yet never once so much as bid them be subject to the bishop, that "resemblance of God the Father, supplying of the place of Christ," nor told them how terrible a thing it was to disobey him, nor pawned his soul for theirs that should submit to him, that all that obeyed him were safe, all that disobeyed him were rebellious, cursed, and separated from God; what apology can be made for the weakness and ignorance of that holy martyr, if we shall suppose him to have had apprehensions like those in these epistles of that sacred order, for omitting those all-conquering reasons which they would have supplied him withal to his purpose in hand, and pitching on arguments every way less cogent and useful? But I say I shall not insist on any such things as these, but only,—

4. I say that there is not in any of the doctor's *excerpta* from these epistles, nor in any passage in them, any mention or the least intimation of any church whereunto any bishop was related, but such an one as whose members met all together in one place, and with their bishop disposed and ordered the affairs of the church. Such was that whereunto the holy martyr was related; such were those neighbouring churches that sent bishops or elders to that church; and when the doctor proves the contrary, "erit mihi magnus Apollo." From the churches, and their state and constitution, is the state and condition of their officers, and their relation to them, to be taken. Let that be manifested to be such, from the appointment of Jesus Christ by his apostles, or *de facto* in the days of Ignatius, or before the contemperation of ecclesiastical affairs, occasionally or by choice, to the civil constitution of cities and provinces in those days, as would, or possibly could, bear a rural, diocesan, metropolitical hierarchy, and this controversy will be at an end. When this is by any attempted to be demonstrated, I desire it may not be with such sentences as that urged by our doctor from Epist. ad Eph., Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς τοῦ πατρὸς ἡ γνώμη, ὡς καὶ οἱ ἐπίσκοποι οἱ κατὰ τὰ πέρατα ὁρισθέντες Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ γνώμη εἰσίν· the expression in it concerning Christ being unsound, unscriptural; con-

cerning bishops, unintelligible or ridiculous. But it may be said, "What need we any more writing, what need we any truer proof or testimony? the learned doctor, in his Dissertations, Dissert. iv. cap. v. hath abundantly discharged this work, and proved the seven bishops of the seven churches mentioned Rev. ii., iii., to have been metropolitans or archbishops, so that no just cause remains why we should farther contend."

Let, then, the reader pardon this my utmost excursion in this digression, to whose compass I had not the least thought of going forth at the entrance thereof, and I shall return thither whence I have turned aside.

Dissert. iv. cap. v., the doctor tells us that "Septem ecclesiarum angeli, non tantum episcopi sed et metropolitæ, *i. e.*, archiepiscopi statuendi sunt, *i. e.*, principalium urbium ἔξαρχοι ad quos provinciæ integræ et in iis multarum inferiorum urbium ecclesiæ, earumque episcopi tanquam ad archiepiscopum aut metropolitanum pertinebant."

The doctor in this chapter commences *per saltum*, and taking it for granted that he hath proved diocesan bishops sufficiently before, though he hath scarce spoken any one word to that purpose in his whole book (for to prove one superintending in a church by the name of bishop, others acting in some kind of subordination to him by the name of elders and presbyters, will, upon the account of what hath been offered concerning the state of the churches in those days, no way reach to the maintenance of this presumption), he sacrifices his pains to the metropolitical archiepiscopal dignity, which, as we must suppose, is so clearly founded in Scripture and antiquity that they are as blind as bats and moles who cannot see the ground and foundation of it.

But, first, be it taken for granted that the angels of the seven churches are to be taken for the governors of those churches, then that each angel be an individual bishop of the church to which he did belong; secondly, be it also granted that they were bishops of the most eminent church or churches in that province, or Roman political distribution of those countries in the management of the government of them, I say bishops of such churches, not "*urbium* ἔξαρχοι," as the doctor terms them;—what advance is made by all this to the assertion of a metropolitical archiepiscopacy I cannot as yet discover. That they were ordinary officers of Christ's institution, relating in their office and ordinary discharge of it not only to the particular churches wherein they were placed, but to many churches also, no less committed to their charge than those wherein they did reside, the officers, rulers, governors of which churches depended on them, not only as to their advice and counsel, but as to their power and jurisdiction, holding their place and employment from them, is some part of that which, in this undertaking, is incumbent on our doctor to make good, if he will not be supposed to prevaricate in the cause in hand. To this end he informs us, sect. secunda, that in the New Testament there is in sundry places mention made of "churches" in the plural number, as Gal. i. 2, 22; 1 Thess. ii. 14; Acts ix. 31, xv. 41; 1 Cor. xvi. 1; Rev. i. 11;—sometimes of "church" only in the singular number, as Acts viii. 1, xi. 26; xv. 3, 4, 22, Rom. xvi. 1; 1 Cor. i. 2; 2 Cor. i. 1; 1 Thess. i. 1; Rev. ii. 1, 8, 12, 18, iii. 1, 7, 14. Now, this is an observation, which as we are not at all beholden to the doctor for it, no more, I suppose, will there be found to be to it when the reason of it shall be a little weighed and considered. The sum is, that the name "church" in the singular number is never used but when it relates to the single congregation in, or of, one city or town; that of "churches" respecting the several churches or congregations that were gathered in any country or province. Manifest, then, is it from hence that there is in

the New Testament no "church" of one denomination beyond a single congregation; and where there are more, they are always called "churches." How evidently this is destructive to any diocesan or metropolitical officer, who hath no church left him thereby of Christ's institution to be related to, another opportunity will manifest. For the present, let us see what use our doctor makes of this observation.

Sect. 3, says he, "Judea, and the rest of the places where churches are mentioned, are the names of provinces ἐπαρχιῶν, quatenus eæ παροικίαις et διοικήσεσι, contradistinguntur." If the doctor takes these words in an ecclesiastical sense, he begs that which will, upon such unworthy terms, never be granted him; but if no more be intended but that Judea, Galatia, and the like names of countries, were provinces wherein were many churches, Smyrna, Ephesus, of towns and cities wherein there was but one, we grant it with him.

And how much that concession of ours is to his advantage hath been intimated. And this seems to be his intendment by his following words: "Provinciarum inquam in quibus plurimæ civitates, singulæ singularum ecclesiarum sedes, comprehendebantur, ideoque ecclesiæ in plurali istius sive istius provinciæ dicendæ." Well, what then? "Cum tamen unaquæque civitas, cum territorio sibi adjuncto (λῆος!) ab episcopo suo administrata, singularis ecclesia dicenda sit; ideoque quod κατ' ἐκκλησίαν, factum dicitur, Acts xiv. 23; κατὰ πόλιν, fieri jubetur, Tit. i. 5." That in every city there was a singular church in those provinces (I speak of those where any number were converted to the faith) I grant; for the annexed territories let the doctor take care, there being one church at Corinth and another at Cenchrea: so that every single city had its own single church, with its bishops in it, as at Philippi. The passage mentioned by the doctor concerning the Epistle of Dionysius to the Church at Gortyna in Crete is very little to his purpose; neither doth he call Philip, the bishop of that church, the bishop of all the other churches in Crete, as the doctor intimates, but the bishop of them to whom especially and eminently he wrote.

Sect 4, application is made of the fore-mentioned observation, sect. 2, and the interpretation given of it, sect. 3, in these words: "His sic positis, illud statim sequitur ut (in imperii cognitione) in provincia qualibet, cum plures urbes sint, una tamen primaria, et principalis censenda erat, μητρόπολις ideo dicta, cui itidem inferiores reliquæ civitates subjiciebantur, ut civitatibus regiones, sic et inter ecclesias et cathedras episcopales unam semper primariam et metropoliticam fuisse."

In this section the doctor hath most ingenuously and truly given us the rise and occasion of his diocesan and metropolitical prelates. *From the aims of men to accommodate ecclesiastical or church affairs to the state and condition of the civil government*, and distributions of provinces, metropolitan cities, and chief towns, within the several dependencies (the neighbouring villages being cast in as things of no great esteem to the lot of the next considerable town and seat of judicature), did the hierarchy which he so sedulously contendeth for arise. What advantages were afforded to the work by the paucity of believers in the villages and less towns (from which at length the whole body of heathenish idolaters were denominated Pagans); the first planting of churches in the greater cities; the eminence of the officers of the first churches in those cities; the weakness of many rural bishops; the multiplying and growing (in numbers, and persons of gifts, abilities, and considerable fortunes and employments in this world,) in the metropolitan cities, with their fame thereby; the tradition of the abode of some one or other of the apostles in such cities and churches;

the eminent accommodation for the administration of civil jurisdiction and other affairs, which appeared in that subordination and dependency whereinto the provinces, chief cities, and territories in the Roman empire were cast; with what opportunities Satan got by these means to introduce the ways, state, pomp, words, phrases, terms of honour of the world into the churches, insensibly getting ground upon them, and prevailing to their declension from the naked simplicity and purity wherein they were first planted,—some other occasion may give advantage for us to manifest. For the present it may suffice that it is granted that the magnific hierarchy of the church arose from the accommodation of its state and condition [to that] of the Roman empire and provinces; and this, in the instances of after-ages that might be produced, will easily be made yet farther evident in those shameful, or, indeed, rather shameless, contests which fell out among the bishops of the third century and downward about precedency, titles of honour, extent of jurisdiction, ecclesiastical subjection to or exemption from one another. The considerableness of their cities, in the civil state of the Roman empire, where they did reside was still the most prevalent and cogent argument in their brawls. The most notable brush that in all antiquity we find given to the great leviathan of Rome, who sported himself in those "gatherings together of the waters of people, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues," or the "general councils," as they are called, was from an argument taken from the seat of the empire being fixed at Constantinople, making it become new Rome, so that the bishop of the church there was to enjoy equal privileges with him whose lot was fallen in the old imperial city. But our doctor adds,—

Sect. 5, "Illud ex Judæorum exemplari transcripsisse apostoli videntur; cum Mosaica id lege cautum esset, ut judices et ministri in qualibet civitate ordinarentur, Deut. xvi. 18. Illi vero in rebus dubiis ad judicem (Mosis successorem) synedrio Hierosolymitano cinctum recurrere tenerentur," cap. xvii. 9. And in sect. 6, he proves Jerusalem to have been the metropolis of that whole nation. *Egregiam vero laudem!* But,—

1. The doctor, I presume, knows before this that those with whom he hath to do will never give him the thing in question upon his begging or request. That which alone falls in under our consideration and inquiry is, whether the apostles instituted any such model of church order and government as is by the doctor contended for: to this he tells you that the apostles seem to have done it from the pattern of Mosaical institutions in the church of the Jews. But, doctor, the question is not with what respect they did it, but whether they did it at all or no. This the doctor thought good to let alone until another time, if we would not grant him upon his petition that so they did.

2. This, then, is the doctor's second argument for his diocesan and metropolitan prelates; his first was from the example of the heathens in their civil administration and rule, this second from the example of the Jews. Not to divert into the handling of the church and political state of the Jews as appointed of God, nor into that dissonancy that is between the institution of civil magistrates and evangelical administrations, this is the sum of the doctor's reasoning in his 5th, 6th, 7th, and 8th sections:—"God, in the church and among the people of the Jews, chose out one city to place his name there, making it the place where all the types and ceremonies which he had appointed for the discovery and shadowing forth of the Lord Jesus Christ were visibly and gloriously to be managed, acted, and held forth (sundry of them being such as whose typicalness would have been destroyed by their multiplication), and principally on this account

making that place or city (which was first Shiloh) the seat of the kingdom, or habitation of the chief ruler for the administration of justice, who appointed judges in all the land, for the good and peace of the people; therefore, the churches of Jesus Christ, dispersed over the face of the whole world, freed from obligations to cities or mountains, walking before God in and with a pure and spiritual worship, having no one reason of that former institution in common with the church of the Jews, must be cast into the same mould and figure." I hope without offence I may take leave to deny the consequence, and what more I have to say to this argument I shall yet defer.

But the doctor proceeds to prove that indeed the apostles did dispose of the churches in this frame and order, according to the pattern of the civil government of the Roman empire and that instituted of God among the Jews. The 9th section, wherein he attempts the proof of this assertion, is as followeth:—

"Ad hanc imaginem, apostolos ecclesias ubique disponendas curasse, et in omnibus plantationibus suis, minorum ab eminentioribus civitatibus dependentiam, et subordinationem constituisse exemplis quidem plurimis monstrari possit, illud in Syria et Cilicia patet, Act. xvi. 4; eum enim ζήτημα illud, cap. xv. 2, Hierosolymas referretur ab ecclesia ἰδίως Antiochiæ, cap. xiv. 26. xv. 3; et decretum ab apostolis denuo ad eos mitteretur, ver. 22; in epistola, qua decretum illud continebatur simul cum Antiochensibus τοὺς κατὰ Συρίαν καὶ Κιλικίαν ἀδελφοὺς comprehensos videmus, ver. 23. Dein epistola ista Antiochenæ ecclesiæ reddita, ver. 30. Paulus tandem et Silas Syriam et Ciliciam peragrantes, ver. 41, cap. xvi. 4, δόγματα κεκριμένα ὑπὸ τῶν ἀποστόλων, singulis civitatibus observanda tradiderunt, ut quæ ad hanc Antiochiæ metropolin, ut totidem subordinatæ ecclesiæ pertinerent; ut et ipsa Antiochia ad Hierosolymas, primariam tam latæ (ut ex Philone prædiximus) provinciæ metropolin pertinebat, et ad eam ad dirimendam litem istam se conferebat."

This being all that the doctor hath to produce from the Scripture to his purpose in hand, I have transcribed it at large; for this being removed, all that follows will fall of its own accord:—

First, then, the dependence on and subordination of lesser cities to the greater is asserted as an apostolical institution. Now, because I suppose the doctor will not assert, nor doth intend, a civil dependence and subordination of cities as such among themselves; nor will a dependence as to counsel, advice, assistance, and the like supplies, which in their mutual communion the lesser churches might receive from the greater and more eminent, serve his turn; but an ecclesiastical dependence and subordination, such as whereby many particular churches, with inferior officers residing in them and with them, depended on and were in subjection unto some one person of a superior order, commonly residing in some eminent city, and many of these governors of a superior order in the greater cities were in such subordination unto some one of high degree, termed a metropolitan, and all this by apostolical institution, is that which he aimeth at: which being a most gallant adventure in a waking generation, we shall doubtless find him quitting himself like a man in his undertaking.

Secondly, then, he tells you that *the question about Mosaical rites and necessity of their observation was referred to Jerusalem by the single church of Antioch.* But how does the doctor make good this first step? which yet if he could, would do him no good at all. It is true that Paul was now come to Antioch, chap. xiv. 26; also, that he was brought on his way by the church, chap. xv. 3; but yet that the brethren who were taught the doctrine con-

tested about, verses 1, 2, were only of the church of Antioch (when it is most certain, from the epistles of Paul to the Galatians, Colossians, Romans, and others, that great disturbance was raised far and wide, in all the churches of the Gentiles, about this controversy), nothing is offered. It seems, indeed, that their disputes grew to the greatest height at Antioch, whither brethren from other parts and churches did also come whilst Barnabas and Paul abode there; but that that single church referred the determining of that controversy to them at Jerusalem, exclusively to others, the doctor proves not. And it is most evident, from the return of the answer sent by the apostles from Jerusalem, verse 23, that the reference was from all the churches of the Gentiles, yea, and all the scattered brethren, perhaps as yet not brought into church order, not only at Antioch, but also throughout Syria and Cilicia. It is then granted, what he next observes, namely, that in the answer returned from Jerusalem, with them at Antioch those in Syria and Cilicia are joined; the reason of it being manifest, namely, their trouble about the same controversy being no less than theirs at Antioch. It is also granted, that, as Paul passed through the cities, he delivered them the decrees to keep that were ordained by the apostles and elders, chap. xvi. 4; and that not only to the churches of Syria and Cilicia, which he left, chap. xv. 41, but also to those throughout Phrygia and the region of Galatia, chap. xvi. 6. What now follows out of all this? What but that Antioch, by apostolical institution, was the metropolitan see of all the churches of Syria and Cilicia! Good doctor, do not be angry, but tell us how this may be proved. Why, doubtless it was so, as Antioch belonged to the metropolitan church at Jerusalem, as he told us out of Philo! (who was excellently acquainted with apostolical institutions.) What Jerusalem was to the whole church and nation of the Jews, whilst the name of God was fixed there, we know; but what was the primitive estate of the churches of Jesus Christ, made up of Jews and Gentiles, tied neither to city nor mountain, I must be pardoned if I cannot find the doctor making any tender of manifesting or declaring. The reason of referring this controversy unto a determination at Jerusalem the Holy Ghost acquaints us with, chap. xv. 2; so that we have no need of this metropolitical figment to inform us in it. And now if we will not only not submit to diocesan bishops, but also not reverence the grave metropolitans, standing upon such clear apostolical institution, it is fit that all the world should count us the arrantest schismatics that ever lived since Pope Boniface's time. The sum, then, of this doughty argument for the apostolical institution of metropolitans (that none might ever more dare to call diocesans into question hereafter) is this: Paul, who was converted about the third or fourth year of Caligula, five or six years after the ascension of Christ, having with great success for three years preached the gospel, went up to Jerusalem with Barnabas, upon the persecution raised against him at Damascus, chap. ix. 22–27; whence, returning to his work, he went first to Tarsus, verse 30; thence to Antioch, where he abode one whole year, chap. xi. 25, 26; and was then sent to Jerusalem with the collection for the saints, about the fourth year of Claudius, verses 29, 30; thence returning again to Antioch, he was sent out by the command of the Holy Ghost, more eminently and peculiarly than formerly, for the conversion of the Gentiles, chap. xiii. 1–3. In this undertaking, in the space of a year or two, he preached and gathered churches (whereof express mention is made) at Salamis, chap. xiii. 5; at Paphos, verse 6; at Perga in Pamphylia, verse 13; at Antioch in Pisidia, verse 14; at Iconium, chap. xiv. 1; at Lystra and Derbe, verse 6; and at Perga, verse 25: in all these places gathering some believers to Christ; whom, before they returned

to Antioch, he visited all over the second time, and settled elders in the several congregations, chap. xiv. 21–23. In this journey and travel for the propagation of the gospel, he seems in all places to have been followed, almost at the heels, by the professing Pharisees, who imposed the necessity of the observation of the Mosaical ceremonies upon his new converts; for instantly upon his return to Antioch, where, during his absence, probably they had much prevailed, he falls into dispute with them, chap. xv. 1, 2;—and that he was not concerned in this controversy only upon the account of the church of Antioch, himself informs us, Gal. ii. 4, affirming that the false brethren which caused those disputes and dissensions crept in to spy out his liberty in his preaching the gospel among the Gentiles, verse 2,—that is, in the places before mentioned, throughout a great part of Asia. For the appeasing of this difference, and the establishing of the souls of the disciples, which were grievously perplexed with the imposition of the Mosaical yoke, it is determined that the case should be resolved by the apostles, Acts xv. 2; partly because of their authority in all the churches, wherein those who contended with Paul would be compelled to acquiesce, and partly because those Judaizing teachers pretended the commission of the apostles for the doctrine they preached, as is evident from the disclaimure made by them of any such commission or command, verse 24. Upon Paul's return from the assembly at Jerusalem, wherein the great controversy about Jewish ceremonies was stated and determined, after he had in the first place delivered the decrees and apostolical salutation by epistle to the church at Antioch, he goes with them also to the churches in Syria and Cilicia, expressed in the letter by name, as also to those in Pamphylia, Pisidia, Derbe, Lystra, Iconium, etc., chap. xvi. 1–4, and all the churches which he had gathered and planted in his travels through Asia, whereunto he was commanded by the Holy Ghost, chap. xiii. 1, 2. Things being thus stated, it necessarily follows that the apostles had instituted diocesan and metropolitan bishops; for though the churches were so small, and thin, and few in number, that, seven years after this, may we believe our doctor, the apostles had not instituted or appointed any elders or presbyters in them,—namely, when Paul wrote his epistle to the Philippians, which was when he was prisoner in Rome, as appears, chap. i. 7, 13, 14, iv. 22, about the third year of Nero,—yet that he had fully built and settled the hierarchical fabric contended for, who once dares question!

> "Audacia—
> Creditur a multis fiducia."—[Juven., xiii. 109, 110.]

But if this will not do, yet Ignatius hits the nail on the head, and is ready at hand to make good whatsoever the doctor will have him say, and his testimony takes up the sense of the two next following sections, whereof the first is as follows:—

"Hinc dicti Ignatiani ratio constat in epistola ad Romanos, ubi ille Antiochiæ episcopus se τῆς ἐν Συρίᾳ ἐκκλησίας ποιμένα, pastorem ecclesiæ quæ est in Syria appellet, cum ad Antiochiam, scil. ut ad metropolin suam tota Syria pertineret. Sic et author epistolæ ad Antiochenos, ἐκκλησίᾳ Θεοῦ παροικούσῃ ἐν Συρίᾳ τῇ ἐν Ἀντιοχείᾳ, eam inscribens totam, Syriam ejus παροικίαν esse concludit."

But yet I fear the doctor will find he hath need of other weapons and other manner of assistance to make good the cause he hath undertaken. The words of Ignatius in that epistle to the Romans are, [cap. ix.] Μνημονεύετε ἐν τῇ εὐχῇ ὑμῶν τῆς ἐν Συρίᾳ ἐκκλησίας ἥτις ἀντ' ἐμοῦ ποιμένι χρῆται τῷ Κυρίῳ. Because he recommends to them that particular church in Syria, which,

by his imprisonment, was deprived of its pastor, therefore, without doubt, he was a metropolitical archbishop: "Tityre, tu patulæ," etc. But the doctor is resolved to carry his cause; and therefore, being forsaken of all fair and honest means from whence he might hope for assistance or success, he tries (as Saul the witch of Endor) the counterfeit, spurious title of a counterfeit epistle to the Antiochians, to see if that will speak any comfortable words for his relief or no. And to make sure work, he causes this gentleman so to speak as if he intended to make us believe that Syria was in Antioch, not Antioch in Syria; as in some remote parts of the world, they say, they inquire whether London be in England or England in London. What other sense can be made of the words as by the doctor transcribed? Ἐκκλησίᾳ Θεοῦ παροικούσῃ ἐν Συρίᾳ τῇ ἐν Ἀντιοχείᾳ· —"To the church of God dwelling in Syria, which is in Antioch." Now if this be so, I shall confess it is possible we may be in more errors than one, and that we much want the learned doctor's assistance for our information. The words themselves, as they are used by the worshipful writer of that epistle, will scarce furnish us with this learned and rare notion: they are at length, Ἰγνάτιος ὁ καὶ Θεοφόρος (for so he first opens his mouth with a lie), ἐκκλησίᾳ ἠλεημένῃ ὑπὸ Θεοῦ, ἐκλελεγμένῃ ὑπὸ Χριστοῦ παροικούσῃ ἐν Συρίᾳ, καὶ πρώτῃ Χριστοῦ ἐπωνυμίαν λαζούσῃ τῇ ἐν Ἀντιοχείᾳ. What is here more expressed than that the latter passage, "In Antioch," is restrictive of what went and before was spoken of its residence in Syria, with reference to the name of Christians, first given to the disciples in that place, I know not; and therefore it is most certain that the apostles instituted metropolitan archbishops ὅπερ ἔδει δεῖξαι!

But to make all sure, the learned doctor will not so give over; but, sect. 11, he adds that the epigraph of the epistle to the Romans grants him the whole case; that is, Ἐκκλησίᾳ ἥτις προκάθηται ἐν τόπῳ χωρίου Ῥωμαίων· "Ex qua," saith he, "ecclesiæ Romanæ, ejusque episcopo super ecclesiis omnibus in urbicaria regione, aut provincia Romana contentis, præfecturam competiise videmus."

Although I have spent some time in the consideration of men's conjectures of those suburbicarian churches, that, as is pretended, are here pointed to, and the rise of the bishop of Rome's jurisdiction over those churches, in a correspondency to the civil government of the prefect of the city, yet so great a critic in the Greek tongue as Casaubon, Exer. xvi. ad An. 150, having professed that expression, Ἐν τόπῳ χωρίου Ῥωμαίων, to be "barbarous" and "unintelligible," I shall not contend about it. For the presidency mentioned of the church in or at Rome, that it was a presidency of jurisdiction, and not only an eminency of faith and holiness, that is intended, the doctor thinks it not incumbent on him to prove,—those with whom he hath to do are of another mind,—although by this time some alteration might be attempted, yea there was, as elsewhere shall be showed. And so much for Ignatius' archiepiscopacy.

The example of Alexandria is urged in the next place, in these words: "Idem de Alexandria, de qua Eusebius, Marcum, Ἐκκλησίας πρῶτον ἐπ' αὐτῆς Ἀλεξανδρείας συστήσασθαι, Ecclesias (in plurali) primum in Alexandria instituisse. Has omnes ab eo sub nomine τῆς ἐν Ἀλεξανδρείᾳ παροικίας, administrandas suscepisse Annianum, Neronis anno octavo idem Eusebius affirmat; quibus patet primariam Alexandria et patriarchalem cathedram fixam esse, ad quam reliquæ provinciæ illius ecclesiæ a Marco plantatæ, ut ad metropoliticam suam pertinebant." Doubtless; for,—1. There is not any passage in any ancient author more clearly discovering the uncertainty of many things in antiquity than this pointed to by the doctor in Eusebius;

for, first, the sending of Mark the evangelist into Egypt, and his preaching there at Alexandria what he had written in the Gospel, is but a report Men said so, but what ground they had for their saying so he relates not. And yet we know what a foundation of many assertions by following writers this rumour or report is made to be. 2. In the very next words the author affirms, and insists long upon it in the next chapter, that Philo's book περὶ τοῦ βίου τῶν Ἀσκητῶν, was written concerning the Christians converted by Mark's preaching at Alexandria, when it is notoriously known that it treateth of the Essenes, a sect among the Jews, amongst whose observances many things were vain, superstitious, and foolish, unworthy to be once applauded as the practice of any Christian in those days; that same Philo, as far as can be gathered, living and dying in the Jewish religion, having been employed by them with an apology to Rome in the days of Caligula. But, 3. Suppose that Mark were at Alexandria, and preached the gospel there (which is not improbable), and planted sundry churches in that great and populous city of Jews and Gentiles; and that, as an evangelist, the care of those churches was upon him in a peculiar manner; nay, and add farther, that after his death, as Jerome assures us, the elders and presbyters of those churches chose out one among themselves to preside in their convocations and meetings;—if, I say, all this be supposed, what will ensue? Why, then, it is manifest that there was fixed at Alexandria a patriarchal chair and a metropolitical church, according to the appointment of Jesus Christ by his apostles! "Si hoc non sit probationum satis, nescio quid sit satis." If some few congregations live together in love, and communion, and the fellowship of the gospel in a city, he is stark blind that sees not that to be an archbishop's see. The reason is as clear as his in the Comedian for the freedom of his wife: — "*Sy.* Utinam Phrygiam uxorem meam una mecum videam liberam. *Dem.* Optimam mulierem quidem. *Sy.* Et quidem nepoti tuo, hujus filio, hodie primam mammam dedit hæc. *Dem.* Hercle, vero, serio, siquidem primam dedit haud dubium quin emitti æquom siet. *Mic.* Ob eam rem? *Dem.* Ob eam." And there is an end of the contest. The doctor, indeed, hath sundry other sections added to those foregoing; which as they concern times more remote from those who first received the apostolical institutions, so I must ingenuously profess that I cannot see any thing whereon to fasten a suspicion of a proof, so far as to call it into examination, and therefore I shall absolve the reader from the penalty of this digression.

The truth is, when I first named Ignatius for a witness in the cause I am pleading for, I little thought of that excursion which I have occasionally been drawn out unto. When first I cast an eye, some few months since, upon the dissertations of the learned doctor in defence of episcopacy, and saw it so chequered with Greek and Latin, so full of quotations divine and human, I began to think that he dealt with his adversaries "hastisque, clypeisque, et saxis grandibus," that there would be no standing before his shower of arguments. But after a little serious perusal, I must take leave to say that I was quickly of another mind; with the reason of which change of thoughts, could I once obtain the leisure of a few days or hours, I should quickly, God willing, acquaint them who are concerned in affairs of this nature. In the meantime, if the reader will pardon me this digression, having given him an account of my thoughts concerning the epistles of Ignatius, I shall, in a procedure upon my first intention, bring forth some testimonies from him, "et valeant quantum valere possunt."

He seems, in the first place, to speak sufficiently clearly to the death of

[1] Ter. Adel v. 9, 15, etc.

Christ for his church, for believers, in a peculiar manner; which is one considerable bottom and foundation of the truth we plead for: Epist. ad Trall. [cap. viii.], Γίνεσθε μιμηταὶ παθημάτων (Χριστοῦ), καὶ ἀγάπης αὐτοῦ ἣν ἠγάπησεν ἡμᾶς, δοὺς ἑαυτὸν περὶ ἡμῶν λύτρον, ἵνα τῷ αἵματι αὐτοῦ καθαρίσῃ ἡμᾶς παλαιᾶς δυσσεβείας, καὶ ζωὴν ἡμῖν παράσχηται, μέλλοντας, ὅσον οὐδέπω, ἀπόλλυσθαι ὑπὸ τῆς ἐν ἡμῖν κακίας.

And again, Epist. ad. Philad. [cap. ix.]: By Christ, saith he, εἰσῆλθον Ἀβραὰμ, καὶ Ἰσαὰκ, καὶ Ἰακὼβ, Μωσῆς, καὶ ὁ σύμπας τῶν προφητῶν χορὸς, καὶ οἱ στύλοι τοῦ κόσμου οἱ ἀπόστολοι, καὶ ἡ νύμφη τοῦ Χριστοῦ ὑπὲρ ἧς (φερνῆς λόγῳ) ἐξέχεε τὸ οἰκεῖον αἷμα, ἵνα αὐτὴν ἐξαγοράσῃ· with many the like expressions. His confidence also of the saints' perseverance, for whom Christ thus died, he doth often profess. Speaking of the faith of the gospel, he adds: Ταῦτα ὁ γνοὺς ἐν πληροφορίᾳ καὶ πιστεύσας μακάριος. ὥσπερ οὖν καὶ ὑμεῖς φιλόθεοι καὶ φιλόχριστοί ἐστε, ἐν πληροφορίᾳ τῆς ἐλπίδος ὑμῶν, ἧς ἐκτραπῆναι μηδενὶ ὑμῶν γένηται.

And again more clearly and fully to the same purpose, Epist. ad Smyrn. [cap. i.]: Ἐνόησα γὰρ ὑμᾶς κατηρτισμένους ἐν ἀκινήτῳ πίστει, ὥσπερ καθηλωμένους ἐν τῷ σταυρῷ τοῦ Κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, σαρκί τε καὶ πνεύματι καὶ ἡδρασμένους ἐν ἀγάπῃ ἐν τῷ αἵματι τοῦ Χριστοῦ, πεπληροφορημένους ὡς ἀληθῶς, etc. And this confirmation and establishment in believing he ascribes not to their manly considerations, but to the grace of Christ, exclusively to any of their own strength, Epist. ad Smyrn. [cap. iv.]: Πάντα, saith he of himself, ὑπομένω διὰ Χριστὸν, εἰς τὸ συμπαθεῖν αὐτῷ, αὐτού με ἐνδυναμοῦντος, οὐ γάρ μοι τοσοῦτον σθένος.

To the same purpose, and with the same confident persuasion, he speaks, Epist. ad Ephes., [cap. ix.]:—

Ῥύσεται ὑμᾶς Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς, ὁ θεμελιώσας ὑμᾶς ἐπὶ τὴν πέτραν, ὡς λίθους ἐκλεκτοὺς εὐαρμολογουμένους εἰς οἰκοδομὴν θείαν Πατρὸς, ἀναφερομένους εἰς τὰ ὕψη διὰ Χριστοῦ, τοῦ ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν σταυρωθέντος, σχοίνῳ χρωμένους τῷ Ἁγίῳ Πνεύματι, etc.

And again in the same epistle [cap. xiv.]: Ἀρχὴ ζωῆς πίστις, τελος δὲ ἀγάπη· τὰ δὲ δύο ἐν ἑνότητι γενόμενα Θεοῦ ἄνθρωπον ἀποτελεῖ· τὰ δὲ ἄλλα πάντα εἰς καλοκαγαθίαν ἀκόλουθά εστι.

And in his last epistle [ad Rom. cap. vii.], he gives us that noble expression of his own assurance: Ὁ ἐμὸς ἔρως ἐσταύρωται, καὶ οὐκ ἔστιν ἐν ἐμοὶ πῦρ φιλοῦν τι· ὕδωρ δε ζῶν ἀλλόμενον ἐν ἐμοὶ, ἔσωθέν μοι λέγει, Δεῦρο πρὸς τὸν Πατέρα· where we leave the holy soul until the same God gather us to him and the rest of the spirits of just men made perfect.

And this was the language, these were the expressions, of this holy man; which what they discover of his judgment on the case under consideration is left to the learned reader to consider. This I am certain, our adversaries have very little cause to boast of the consent of the primitive Christians with them in the doctrine of apostasy, there being in these most ancient writers after the apostles, about the things of our religion, not the least shadow cast upon it for its refreshment.

Add, in the next place, the most ancient of the Latins, TERTULLIAN, that great storehouse of all manner of learning and knowledge. Saith he, "Quemadmodum nobis arrhabonem spiritus reliquit, ita et a nobis arrhabonem carnis accepit, et vexit in cœlum, pignus totius summæ illuc redigendæ," Tertull., De Resur. The certain salvation of the whole mystical body of Christ, with whom he hath that communion as to give them his Spirit, as he took their flesh (for he took upon him flesh and blood, because the children were partakers of the same), is evidently asserted; which he could not do who thought that any of those on whom he bestowed his Spirit might perish everlastingly.

And again, De Præscripti. advers. Hæret.: "In pugna pugilum et gla-

diatorum, plerumque non quia fortis est, vincit quis, aut quia non potest vinci; sed quoniam ille qui victus est, nullis viribus fuit: adeo idem ille victor bene valenti postea comparatus, etiam superatus recedit. Non aliter hæreses de quorundam infirmitatibus habent quod valent, nihil valentes si in bene valentem fidem incurrant. Solent quidem isti infirmines etiam de quibusdam personis ab hæresi captis ædificari in ruinam; quare ille vel illa, fidelissimi, prudentissimi, et usitatissimi in ecclesia, in illam partem transierunt? Quis hoc dicens non ipse sibi respondet, neque prudentes, neque fideles, neque usitatos æstimandos quos hæresis potuit demutare?" He plainly denies them to have been believers (that is, truly, thoroughly, properly so) who fall into pernicious heresies to their destruction.

Cyprian is express to our purpose. Saith he, "Nemo existimet bonos de ecclesia posse discedere. Triticum non rapit ventus, nec arborem solida radice fundatam procella subvertit; Inanes paleæ tempestate jactantur, invalidæ arbores turbinis incursione evertuntur. Hos execratur et percutit Johannes apostolus, dicens, 'Ex nobis exierunt, sed non fuerunt ex nobis, si enim fuissent ex nobis, mansissent utique nobiscum,'" Cypr. De Unit. Eccles. [cap. ii.] The whole doctrine we contend for is plainly and clearly asserted, and bottomed on a text of Scripture; which in a special manner (as we have cause) we do insist upon. All that is lost by temptations in the church was but chaff; the wheat abides, and the rooted tree is not cast down. Those fall away who indeed were never true believers in heart and by union, whatever their profession was. And yet we are within the compass of that span of time which our adversaries, without proof, without shame, claim to be theirs. One principal foundation of our doctrine is the bestowing of the Holy Ghost upon believers, by Jesus Christ. Where he is so bestowed, there, say we, he abides; for he is given them for that end, —namely, to "abide with them for ever." Now, concerning him Basil tells us, that "though, in a sort, he may be said to be present with all that are baptized, yet he is never mixed with any that are not worthy; that is, he dwells not with any that obtain not salvation," Basil, Lib. de Spir. Sanc. cap. xvi.;—Νῦν μὲν γὰρ εἰ καὶ μὴ ἀνακέκραται τοῖς ἀναξίοις· ἀλλὰ οὐν παρεῖναι δοκεῖ πῶς τοῖς ἅπαξ ἐσφραγισμένοις. By that seeming presence of the Holy Ghost with hypocrites that are baptized professors, he evidently intends the common gifts and graces that he bestows upon them; and this is all he grants to them who are not at last (for such he discourses of) found worthy.

Macarius Ægyptius, Homil. v., about the same time with the other, or somewhat before, is of the same mind. He tells us that those who are Christians ἐν ἀληθείᾳ καὶ δυνάμει, ἀσφαλεῖς εἰσιν ὑπὸ τοῦ ἀῤῥαβῶνος, οὗ ἐδέξαντο νῦν, ὡς ἤδη ἐστεφανωμένοι καὶ βασιλεύοντες. And how men can be assured of heaven whilst they live here, by the earnest of it which they have received, as well as if they were crowned and reigning in heaven, if those who have received that earnest may lose it again, I know not.

The words of Ambrose to this same purpose, lib. i. cap. vi. De Jacob. et Vita Beat. are many; but because they do not only fully assert the truth we contend for, but also insist briefly on most of the arguments with which in this case we plead, I shall transcribe them at large, and they are as follow:—

"Non gloriabor quia justus sum, sed gloriabor quia redemptus sum; gloriabor non quia vacuus peccatis sum, sed quia mihi remissa sunt peccata; non gloriabor quia profui, nec quia profuit mihi quisquam, sed quia pro me advocatus apud Patrem Christus est, sed quia pro me Christi sanguis effusus est. . . . . Hæredem te fecit, cohæredem Christi; Spiritum tibi adoptionis

infudit. . . . . Sed vereris dubios vitæ anfractus et adversarii insidias, cum habeas auxilium Dei, habeas tantam ejus dignationem. ut filio proprio pro te non pepercerit?—Nihil enim excepit, qui omnium concessit authorem. Nihil est igitur quod negari posse nobis vereamur; nihil est in quo de munificentiæ divinæ diffidere perseverantiâ debeamus, cujus fuit tam diuturna et jugis ubertas, ut primo prædestinaret, deinde vocaret, et quos vocavit hos et justificaret, et quos justificaret hos et glorificaret. Poterit deserere quos tantis beneficiis usque ad præmia prosecutus est? Inter tot beneficia Dei, num metuendæ sunt aliquæ accusatoris insidiæ? sed quis audeat accusare quos electos divino cernit judicio? num Deus Pater ipse qui contulit, potest dona sua rescindere, et quos adoptione suscepit, eos a paterni affectus gratia relegare? Sed metus est ne judex severior fiat. Considera quem judicem habeas; nempe Christo dedit Pater omne judicium; poterit te ergo ille damnare, quem redemit a morte, pro quo se obtulit, cujus vitam suæ mortis mercedem esse cognoscit? nonne dicet, quæ utilitas in sanguine meo, si damno quem ipse salvavi? Denique consideras judicem, non consideras advocatum?"

The foundation of all our glorying in the love of God and assurance of salvation he lays in the free grace of God, in redemption and justification; for the certainty of our continuance in that estate, he urges the decree of God's predestination, the unchangeableness of his love, the complete redemption made by Christ, with his effectual intercession: all which are at large insisted upon in the ensuing treatise.

Add to him his contemporary, CHRYSOSTOM. Ser. 3, in 2 Cor. i. 21, 22: Ὁ δὲ βεβαιῶν ἡμᾶς σὺν ὑμῖν εἰς Χριστὸν, καὶ χρίσας ἡμᾶς Θεός· καὶ σφραγισάμενος ἡμᾶς καὶ δοὺς τὸν ἀρραβῶνα τοῦ Πνεύματος ἐν ταῖς καρδίαις ἡμῶν. Of these words of the apostle he gives the ensuing exposition: Πάλιν ἀπὸ τῶν παρελθόντων τὰ μέλλοντα βεβαιοῦται· εἰ γὰρ αὐτός ἐστιν ὁ βεβαιῶν ἡμᾶς εἰς Χριστὸν (τουτέστιν ὁ μὴ ἐῶν ἡμᾶς παρασαλεύεσθαι ἐκ τῆς πίστεως τῆς εἰς τὸν Χριστὸν) καὶ αὐτὸς ὁ χρίσας ἡμᾶς, καὶ δοὺς τὸ πνεῦμα ἐν ταῖς καρδίαις ἡμῶν, πῶς τὰ μέλλοντα οὐ δώσει; εἰ γὰρ τὰς ἀρχὰς καὶ τὰς ὑποθέσεις ἔδωκε, καὶ τὴν ῥίζαν καὶ τὴν πηγὴν (οἷον τὴν ἀληθῆ περὶ αὐτοῦ γνῶσιν, τὴν τοῦ πνεύματος μετάληψιν) πῶς τὰ ἐκ τούτων οὐ δώσει; εἰ γὰρ ἐκεῖνα διὰ ταῦτα δίδονται, πολλῷ μᾶλλον ὁ ταῦτα δοὺς καὶ ἐκεῖνα παρέξει· καὶ εἰ ταῦτα ἐχθροῖς οὖσιν ἔδωκε, πολλῷ μᾶλλον ἐκεῖνα φίλοις γενομένοις χαρίεται· διὰ τοῦτο οὐδὲ Πνεύμα εἶπεν ἁπλῶς, ἀλλ' ἀρραβῶνα ὠνόμασεν, ἵνα ἀπὸ τούτου, καὶ περὶ τοῦ παντὸς θαῤῥῇς· οὐ γὰρ εἰ μὴ ἔμελλε τὸ πᾶν διδόναι, εἵλετο ἂν τὸν ἀρραβῶνα παρασχεῖν καὶ ἀπολέσαι εἰκῇ καὶ μάτην.

The design and aim of our establishment by the Spirit is, he tells us, that we be not shaken or moved from the faith of Christ; [he] so establisheth us that he suffers us not to depart and fall away from the faith. And that the argument which he insists on,—from what we have presently received to an assurance of abode in our condition, to the enjoyment of the full inheritance,—is not contemptible in the cause in hand, is farther manifested in the treatise itself.

And these instances may suffice for the first period of time mentioned, before the rising of the Pelagian heresy; of which, and those others of the same kind that might be produced, though they may not seem so full and expressive to the point under consideration as those which follow after, yet concerning those authors and their testimonies these two things may be asserted:—

1. That though some expressions may be gathered, from some of the writers within the space of time mentioned, that seem to allow a *possibility of defection* and apostasy in believers,—occasioned, all of them, by the general use of that word, and the taking in the several accounts whereon men,

both in the gospel and in common use, are so called,—yet there is no one of them that ever ascribed the perseverance of them who actually and eventually persevere to such grounds and principles as Mr Goodwin doth, and which the reader shall find at large by him insisted on in the ensuing treatise. The truth is, his maintaining of the saints' perseverance is as bad, if not worse, than his maintaining their apostasy.

2. That I scarce know any head in religion concerning which the mind of the ancients, who wrote before it received any opposition, may be made out more clearly than we have done in this, by the instances produced and insisted on.

The Pelagian heresy began about the year 417. The first opposers thereof are reckoned up by Prosper, cap. ii. De Ingrat. The bishop of Rome, the Palestine synod in the case of Pelagius, Jerome, Atticus, bishop of Constantinople, the synod of Ephesus, [of] Sicily, and two in Afric, he mentions in order, concluding them with the second African, gathered to that end and purpose:—

> "Anne alium in finem posset procedere sanctum
> Concilium, cui dux Aurelius ingeniumque
> Augustinus erat? quem Christi gratia cornu
> Uberiore rigans, nostro lumen dedit ævo,
> Accensum vero de lumine, nam cibus illi
> Et vita et requies Deus est; omnisque voluptas
> Unus amor Christi est; unus Christi est honor illi:
> Et dum nulla sibi quærit bona, fit Deus illi
> Omnia, et in sancto regnat sapientia templo."

And because I shall not burden the reader, being now entered upon the place and time wherein very many witnesses call aloud to be heard about the difference in hand, of the first opposers of the Pelagian heresy, I shall insist only on him who is indeed "instar omnium," and hath ever been so accounted in the controversies about the grace of God; and I shall the rather lay this weight on him, because it is evident that he spake the sense of the whole church in those days wherein he lived. This is AUSTIN, of whom saith the same Prosper: "Noverint illi non solum Romanam ecclesiam Africanamque, sed per omnes mundi partes universos promissionis filios, cum doctrinâ hujus viri, sicut in tota fide, ita in gratiæ confessione congruere," Epist. ad Rusti.

And when his writings began to be carped at by the semi-Pelagians of France, Cælestine, bishop of Rome, in his Epist. ad Gallos, gives him this testimony: "Augustinum, sanctæ recordationis virum pro vita sua et moribus, in nostra communione semper habuimus, nec unquam hunc sinistræ suspicionis rumor saltem aspersit, quem tantæ scientiæ olim fuisse meminimus, ut inter magistros optimos etiam a meis prædecessoribus haberetur." His writings also were made use of not only by Prosper, Hilary, and Fulgentius, but generally by all that engaged against the Pelagians. "Zosimus," saith Prosper, ad Collat. cap. xli., "cum esset doctissimus, adversus libros tamen Pelagianorum beati Augustini responsa poscebat." And Leo, Epist. ad Concil. Arausic., transcribes out of him *verbatim* the things that he would have confirmed and established. And in his own days, notwithstanding the differences between them, the aged and learned Jerome tells him, Epist. xciv., "Mihi decretum est te amare, te suspicere, colere, mirari, tuaque dicta, quasi mea, defendere." Hence was that outcry in the Palestine synod upon the slighting of his authority by Pelagius: "Dixit Pelagius, Quis est mihi Augustinus? Acclamabant omnes blasphemantem in episcopum, ex cujus ore Dominus universæ Africæ unitatis indulserit sanitatem, non solum a conventu illo, sed ab omni ecclesia pelle-

dum," Oros. Apologet. pp. 621, 622. So also Gelas. Biblioth. Pat. Tom. 4, Colum. 553, p. 589.

Fulgentius also, with them assembled with him at Byzacene, when they were banished Afric by Thrasimundus, in that synodical epistle, gives them this counsel: "Præ omnibus studium gerite libros S. Augustini quos ad Prosperum et Hilarium scripsit, memoratis fratribus legendos ingerere," Epist. Synod. Byzac. Much more might be added to manifest the judgment of Austin to have been the catholic judgment of the church in those days; so that in his single testimony as great a number are included as in the testimony of any one man in the world whatever.

Now, the controversy that was between Austin and the Pelagians and semi-Pelagians about perseverance, Hilary thus expresseth in his epistle to him: "Deinde moleste ferunt," speaking of the semi-Pelagians, "ita dividi gratiam, quæ vel tunc primo homini data est, vel nunc omnibus datur, ut ille acceperit perseverantiam, non qua fieret ut perseveraret, sed sine qua per liberum arbitrium perseverare non posset; nunc vero Sanctis in regnum per gratiam prædestinatis, non tale adjutorium perseverantiæ detur, sed tale, ut eis perseverantia ipsa donetur, non solum ut sine illo dono perseverantes esse non possint, verum etiam ut per hoc donum non nisi perseverantes sint. Cæterum quicquid libet donatum sit predestinatis, id posse et amittere et retinere propria voluntate contendunt." The very state of the controversy as now under contest is most clearly expressed in this report of the difference between the semi-Pelagians and the church of God in those days. And because the whole sum of Mr Goodwin's book is briefly comprised in the 9th and 10th chapters of Prosper, De Ingrat., I shall transcribe the 10th chapter, to present to the reader the substance and pith of that treatise, as also the state of the controversy in those days:—

——"Quam sana fides sit vestra patescat,
Gratia qua Christi populus sumus, hoc cohibetur
Limite vobiscum, et formam hanc adscribitis illi:
Ut cunctos vocet illa quidem, invitetque; nec ullum
Præteriens, studeat communem afferre salutem
Omnibus, et totum peccato absolvere mundum;
Sed proprio quemque arbitrio parere vocanti,
Judicioque suo; mota se extendere mente
Ad lucem oblatam, quæ se non subtrahat ulli,
Sed cupidos recti juvet, illustretque volentes.
Hinc adjutoris Domini bonitate magistra
Crescere virtutum studia, ut quod quisque petendum
Mandatis didicit, jugi sectetur amore.
Esse autem edoctis istam communiter æquam
Libertatem animis, ut cursum explere beatum
Persistendo queant, finem effectumque petitum
Dante Deo, ingeniis qui nunquam desit honestis.
Sed quia non idem est cunctis vigor, et variarum
Illecebris rerum trahitur dispersa voluntas,
Sponte aliquos vitiis succumbere, qui potuissent
A lapsu revocare pedem, stabilesque manere."

As I said, we have the sum of Mr Goodwin's book in this declaration of the judgment of the semi-Pelagians, so also, in particular, the state of the controversy about the perseverance of the saints, as then it was debated; and I doubt not but the learned reader will easily perceive it to be no other than that which is now agitated between me and Mr Goodwin. The controversy, indeed, in the matter between Austin and the Pelagians was reduced to three heads:—As to the foundation of it, which Austin concluded to be the decree of predestination: which they denied. The impulsive cause of it he proved to be the free grace of God; and the measure or quality of that grace to be such as that whoever received it did persevere,

it being perseverance which was given: both which they denied. About the kind of faith which temporary professors might have, and fall from it, which were never elected, there was between them no contest at all. Of his judgment, then, there were these two main heads, which he laboured to confirm:—

1. *That perseverance is a gift of God, and that no man either did or could persevere in faith and obedience upon the strength of any grace received* (much less of his own ability, stirred up and promoted by such considerations as Mr Goodwin makes the ground and bottom of the perseverance of all that so do), *but that the whole was from his grace.* Subservient to this, he maintained that no one temptation whatsoever could be overcome but by some act of grace; and that therefore perseverance must needs be a work thereof, it being an abiding in faith and obedience notwithstanding and against temptation. To this is that of his on John, Homil. 53: "Quosdam nimia voluntatis suæ fiducia extulit in superbiam, et quosdam nimia voluntatis suæ diffidentia dejecit in negligentiam: illi dicunt quid rogamus Deum ne vincamur tentatione quod in nostra est potestate? Isti dicunt, at quid conamur bene vivere, quod in Dei est potestate? O Domine, O Pater, qui es in cœlis, ne nos inferas in quamlibet istarum tentationum, sed libera nos a malo. Audiamus Dominum dicentem, 'Rogavi pro te, Petre, ne fides deficiat tua:' ne sic existimemus fidem nostram esse in libero arbitrio ut divino non egeat adjutorio," etc. That, with both of these sorts of men, the way and work of the grace of God is at this day perverted and obscured, is so known to all that it needs no exemplification: some requiring no more to the conquest of temptations but men's own rational consideration of their eternal state and condition, with the tendency of that whereto they are tempted; others turning the grace of God into wantonness, and supinely casting away all heedful regard of walking with God, being enslaved to their lusts and corruptions, under a pretence of God's working all in all;—the latter denying themselves to be men, the former to be men corrupted. And in plain terms the Milevitan council tells us: "Si quis finxerit ideo gratiam esse necessariam ad vitanda peccata, quia facit hominem cognoscere peccata, et discernere inter peccata et non peccata, qua discretione per gratiam habita, per liberum arbitrium potest vitare; is procul," etc. The light of grace to discern the state of things, the nature of sin, and to consider these aright, the Pelagians allowed,—which is all the bottom of that perseverance of saints which we have offered by Mr Goodwin; but upon that supply of these means, to abide and persevere in faith, to flee and avoid sin, is a thing of our own performance.

This the doctors of that council, anno 420, condemned as a Pelagian fiction, as Prosper also presents it at large, cap. xxv. against Cassianus the semi-Pelagian, and farther clears and confirms it. So Austin again, De Bono Persev., cap. ii., "Cur perseverantia ista petitur a Deo, si non datur a Deo? an et ista irrisoria petitio est, cum illud ab eo petitur, quod scitur non ipsum dare, sed ipso non dante, esse in hominis potestate? sicut irrisoria est etiam illa gratiarum actio, si ex hoc gratiæ aguntur Deo quod non donavit ipse nec fecit." And the same argument he useth again, cap. vi. 9, much resting on Cyprian's interpretation of the Lord's Prayer; and cap. xxvi., he farther presseth it, as to the root and foundation of this gift of God: "Si ad liberum arbitrium hominis, quod non secundum gratiam, sed contra eam defendis, pertinere dicis, ut perseveret in bono quisquis, vel non perseveret, non Deo dante sic perseverat, sed humana voluntate faciente." One or two instances more in this kind, amongst hundreds that offer themselves, may suffice.

De Correptione et Gratia, cap. xiv., "Apostolus Judas, cum dicit, 'Ei autem qui potens est,' etc., nonne apertissime ostendit donum Dei esse perseverare in bono usque ad finem? quid enim aliud sonat 'Qui potest conservare nos sine offensione, et constituere ante conspectum gloriæ suæ, immaculatos in lætitia,' nisi perseverantiam bonam? quis tam insulse desipiat, ut neget perseverantiam esse donum Dei, cum dicit sanctissimus Jeremias, 'Timorem meum dabo in corde eorum ut non recedant a me,'" etc. I shall add only that one place more out of the same book (cap. xii.), where both the matter and manner of the thing in hand are fully delivered: "In hoc loco miseriarum, ubi tentatio est vita hominum super terram, virtus in infirmitate perficitur; quæ virtus, nisi 'Qui gloriatur, ut in Domino glorietur?' Ac per hoc de ipsa perseverantia boni noluit Deus sanctos suos in viribus suis, sed in ipso gloriari, qui eis non solum dat adjutorium quod primo homini dedit, sine quo non possit perseverare si velint, sed in iis etiam operatur et velle; et quoniam non perseverabunt nisi et possint, et velint, perseverandi eis et possibilitas et voluntas, divinæ gratiæ largitate, donatur; tantum quippe Spiritu Sancto accenditur voluntas eorum, ut ideo possint quia sic volunt, ideo sic velint, quia Deus operatur ut velint. Nam si tanta infirmitate hujus vitæ ipsis relinquitur voluntas sua, ut in adjutorio Dei, sine quo perseverare non possent, manerent si vellent, ni Deus in eis operaretur ut velint, inter tot, et tantas tentationes, infirmitate sua succumberet voluntas, et ideo perseverare non possent, quia deficientes infirmitate voluntatis non vellent, aut non ita vellent, ut possent. Subventum est igitur infirmitati voluntatis humanæ, ut divina gratia indeclinabiliter, et insuperabiliter ageretur, et ideo quamvis infirma non tamen deficeret." It is not possible that any one should deliver his sense more clearly to the whole of our present contest than this holy and learned man hath done in the words now repeated from him. A gift of God he asserts it to be (and not an act or course of our own, whereto we are prompted by certain considerations, and assisted with such outward means as are also added to us), to the real production of that effect by the efficiency of the grace of God. And for the manner of this work, it is, saith he, by the effectual working the actual will of perseverance in the continuance of our obedience, in a dispensation of grace, different from and beyond what was given to him who had a power of persevering if he would, but received not the will thereof. Now, to Adam's perseverance there was nothing wanting but his will's confirmation in obedience, and his actual doing so. Power he had within and means without, abundantly sufficient for that end in their kind. This, then, he asserts to be given to the saints, and to be the work of God in them, even their actual perseverance. Without this he also manifesteth, that, such is the infirmity of our wills, and such the power of our temptations, that what means soever may be supplied and left to their power, or what manlike, rational considerations soever man may engage his thoughts into, it is impossible any should persevere to the end: which Bradwardin more confirms, De Caus. Dei, lib. ii. cap. viii. Coroll., "Omne quod est naturale, et non est per se tale, si manere debeat immutatum, oportet quod innitatur continue alicui fixo per se: quare quilibet justus Deo."

And the holy man (Austin, I mean) concludes, that this work of God being wrought in a man, his will is indeclinably and inseparably fixed so to obedience as not to fall off from God. This is the foundation that he lays of the doctrine of the perseverance of saints, that it is a gift of God, and that such a gift as he effectually and actually works in him on whom he doth bestow it;—a foundation that will by no means regularly

bear the hay and stubble wherewith men think to build up a doctrine of perseverance, making it a fruit that may or may not be brought forth, from our own use of the means allowed for that end and purpose. And, indeed, the asserting of the perseverance of the saints in that way is as bad (if not a worse and more fearful) opposition to, and slighting of, the grace of God, as the denial of it in the way they oppose. By the latter they oppose the grace of God, by the former set up the power and strength of their own will. Thus far Austin is clearly engaged with us, that perseverance is a gift of God, that it is given by him to every one that doth persevere, and that every one to whom it is given is inseparably confirmed in grace, and shall infallibly persevere to the end.

In that earnest and long contest which that learned doctor insists upon, to prove perseverance to be the gift of God (for which he hath sufficient ground from that of the apostle, 1 Cor. i. 7, 8, "That ye come behind in no gift, waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ," etc.), two things he especially aimed at:—First, An opposing of such a perseverance as should not be the fruit and work of the grace of God in us, but the work and effect of our own endeavours, upon a supply of such means, motives, persuasions, and considerations, as we are or may be furnished withal. Secondly, That it is so given and bestowed, as that on whomsoever it is bestowed, he certainly hath it; that is, he doth certainly persevere. As it was heresy to that holy man to deny perseverance to be the gift of God, so it was ridiculous to him to say that that gift was given to any, and yet that they received it not; that is, that they might not persevere. "Nobis," saith he, De Correp. et Grat., cap. xi., "qui Christo insiti sumus, talis data est gratia, ut non solum possimus si velimus, sed etiam ut velimus in Christo perseverare." And cap. xii., "Non solum ut sine illo dono perseverantes esse non possint, verum etiam ut per hoc donum non nisi perseverantes sint."

And that which he adds afterward is most considerable, concluding from that of our Saviour, "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit." "Eis," saith he, "non solum justitiam, verum etiam in illa perseverantiam dedisse monstravit. Christo enim sic eos ponente ut eant et fructum afferant, et fructus eorum maneat, quis audeat dicere 'Forsitan non manebunt?'" Though they dare say so who also dare to pretend his authority for what they say!—how falsely, how unjustly, is evident to all serious observers of his mind and spirit in and about the things of the grace of God.

2. As he mentioned perseverance to be such a gift of God as indeclinably wrought in them on whom it was bestowed a will to persevere, and on that account perseverance itself (an assertion as obnoxious to the calumny and clamour of the adversaries of the doctrine under consideration as any we teach or affirm concerning it), so he farther constantly taught *this gift and grace to be a fruit of predestination or election, and to be bestowed on all and only elected believers.* So De Predestinatione Sanc., cap. xvii., "Hæc dona Dei dantur electis, secundum Dei propositum vocatis, in quibus est et incipere et credere, et in fide ad hujus vitæ exitum perseverare." And afterward, cap. ix. De Bono Persev. "Ex duobus piis" (of his meaning in that word afterward), "cur huic donetur perseverantia, usque in finem, illi non donetur, inscrutabilia sunt judicia Dei: illud tamen fidelibus debet esse certissimum, hunc esse ex prædestinatis, illum non esse: 'Nam si fuissent ex nobis' (ait unus prædestinatorum qui e pectore Domini biberat hoc secretum) 'mansissent utique nobiscum.' . . . . . Quæ est ista discretio? Patent libri Dei, non avertamus aspectum, clamat Scriptura Divina, adhibe-

amus auditum, non erant ex eis, quia non erant secundum propositum vocati: non erant in Christo electi ante mundi constitutionem, non erant in eo sortem consecuti, non erant prædestinati secundum propositum ejus qui omnia operatur." And unto these elect, predestinate believers, he concluded still that perseverance was so given in and for Christ, so proceeding from the immutable will of God, wrought by such an efficacy of grace, that it was impossible that they should not persevere. He compares it farther with the grace that Adam received: Lib. de Correp. et Grat., cap. xii., "Primo itaque homini, qui in eo bono quo factus fuerat rectus, acceperat posse non peccare, posse non mori, posse ipsum bonum non deserere datum est adjutorium perseverantiæ, non quo fieret ut perseveraret, sed sine quo per liberum arbitrium perseverare non posset. Nunc vero sanctis in regnum Dei per gratiam Dei prædestinatis, non tantum tale adjutorium perseverantiæ datur; sed tale, ut iis perseverantia ipsa donetur, non solum ut sine isto dono perseverantes esse non possint, verum etiam ut per hoc donum non nisi perseverantes sint." And a little after: "Ipse itaque dat perseverantiam, qui stabilire potens est eos qui stant, ut perseverantissime stent." And in the 8th chapter of the same book, expounding that of our Saviour, Luke xxii. 32, "I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not," he manifesteth how, upon that account, it was impossible that the will of Peter should not actually be established to the end in believing. His words are, "An audebis dicere, etiam rogante Christo ne deficeret fides Petri, defecturam fuisse, si Petrus eam deficere voluisset, idque si eam usque in finem perseverare noluisset? Quasi aliud Petrus ullo modo vellet, quam pro illo Christus rogasset ut vellet: nam quis ignorat tunc fuisse perituram fidem Petri, si ea quæ fidelis erat voluntas ipsa deficeret; et permansuram, si voluntas eadem permaneret? Quando ergo oravit ne fides ejus deficeret, quid aliud rogavit, nisi ut haberet in fide liberrimam, fortissimam, invictissimam, perseverantissimam voluntatem?" And in this persuasion he had not only the consent of all the sound and orthodox doctors in his time, as was before manifested, but he is followed also by the schoolmen of all ages, and not forsaken by some of the Jesuits themselves, as we shall afterward see, when we have added that consideration of the doctrine of this learned man which hath given occasion to some to pretend his consent in opposition to that which most evidently he not only delivered but confirmed. There are in Austin, and those that either joined with him or followed immediately after him (notwithstanding the doctrine formerly insisted on, that actual perseverance is a gift of God, and that it flows from predestination, as an effect thereof, and is bestowed on all elect believers, infallibly preserving them unto the end,—wherein they assert and strongly prove the whole of what we maintain), sundry expressions, commonly urged by the adversaries of the truth in hand, granting many who were saints, believing and regenerate, to fall away and perish for ever. I need not instance in any of their sayings to this purpose; the reader knows where to find them gathered to his hand, in Vossius, Grotius, and Mr Goodwin, from them. The seeming contradiction that is amongst themselves in the delivery of this doctrine will easily admit of a reconciliation, may they be allowed the common courtesy of being interpreters of their own meaning. What weight in those days was laid upon the participation of the sacramental figures of grace, and what expressions are commonly used concerning them who had obtained that privilege, are known to all. Hence all baptized persons, continuing in the profession of the faith and communion of the church, they called, counted, esteemed truly regenerate and justified, and spake so of them. Such as these they

constantly affirmed might fall away into everlasting destruction; but yet what their judgment was concerning their present state indeed, even then when they so termed them regenerate and believers, in respect to the sacraments of those graces, Austin in sundry places clearly delivers his thoughts, to the undeceiving of all that are willing to be free. This he especially handles in his book De Correp. et Grat., cap. ix. "Non erant," saith he, "filii, etiam quando erant in professione et nomine filiorum; non quia justitiam simulaverunt, sed quia in ea non permanserunt." This righteousness he esteemed not to be merely feigned and hypocritical, but rather such as might truly entitle them to the state and condition of the children of God, in the sense before expressed.

And again, "Isti cum pie vivunt dicuntur filii Dei, sed quoniam victuri sunt impie, et in eadem impietate morituri, non eos dicit filios Dei præscientia Dei." And farther in the same chapter, "Sunt rursus quidam qui filii Dei propter susceptam temporalem gratiam dicuntur a nobis, nec sunt tamen Deo." And again, "Non erant in numero filiorum, etiam quando erant in fide filiorum." And, "Sicut non vere discipuli Christi, ita nec vere filii Dei fuerunt, etiam quando esse videbantur, et ita vocabantur." He concludes, "Appellamus ergo nos et electos Christi discipulos, et Dei filios, quos regeneratos" (that is, as to the sacramental sign of that grace), "pie vivere cernimus; sed tunc vere sunt quod appellantur, si manserint in eo propter quod sic appellantur. Si autem perseverantiam non habent, id est, in eo quod cœperunt esse non manent, non vere appellantur quod appellantur, et non sunt." As also, De Doct. Christiana, lib. iii. cap. xxxii., "Non est revera corpus Christi quod non erit cum illo in æternum."

And these are the persons which Austin and those of the same judgment with him do grant that they may fall away, such as, upon the account of their baptismal entrance into the church, their pious, devout lives, their profession of the faith of the gospel, they called and accounted regenerate believers; of whom yet they tell you, upon a thorough search into the nature and causes of holiness, grace, and walking with God, that they would be found not to be truly and really in that state and condition that they were esteemed to be in; of which they thought this a sufficient demonstration, even because they did not persevere: which undeniably, on the other hand (with the testimonies foregoing, and the like innumerable that might be produced), evinces that their constant judgment was, that all who are truly, really, and in the sight of God, believers, ingrafted into Christ, and adopted into his family, should certainly persevere; and that all the passages usually cited out of this holy and learned man, to persuade us that he ever cast an eye towards the doctrine of the apostasy of the saints, may particularly be referred to this head, and manifested that they do not at all concern those whom he esteemed saints indeed, which is clear from the consideration of what hath been insisted on. Thus far he, of whom what were the thoughts of the church of God in the days wherein he lived hath been declared; he who hath been esteemed, amongst the ecclesiastical writers of old, to have laboured more, and to more purpose, in the doctrine of the grace of God, than all that went before him, or any that have followed after him; whose renown in the church hath been chiefly upheld and maintained upon the account of the blessed pains and labours, wherein the presence of God made him to excel, for the depressing the pride of all flesh, and the exaltation of the riches of God's love, and efficacy of his grace in Jesus Christ, wherewith the whole church in succeeding ages hath been advantaged beyond what is easy to be expressed.

That Prosper, Hilary, Fulgentius, and the men of renown in the con-

gregation of God at the end of that age, did fall in with their judgments to that which Austin had delivered, I suppose will be easily confessed. Prosper, ad cap. vii. Gal.: "Quomodo eos habeat præordinata in Christo electio? cum dubium non sit donum Dei esse perseverantiam in bono usque ad finem; quod istos, ex eo ipso quod non perseverarunt, non habuisse manifestum est." Also, the breaking of the power and frustrating of the attempt of Pelagius by sundry doctors of the church, and synods to that end assembled (whereof Prosper gives us an account, reckoning them up in their order, and Austin before him, Epist. xlii. and xlvii., with special relation to what was done in Afric, and in the beginning of his verses, De Ingratis), with what troubles were raised and created anew to the champions of the grace of God by the writings of Cassianus, Faustus, Vincentius, the Massilienses, with some others in France, and the whole rabble of semi-Pelagians, with the fiction of Sigibert about a predestinarian heresy (whereof there was never any thing in being, no not among the Adrumentine monks, where Vossius hoped to have placed it), the council of Arles, the corruptions and falsifications of Faustus in the business of Lucidus, the impositions on Gotteschalcus, with the light given to that business from the Epistle of Florus,—have exercised the commendable endeavours of so many already that there is not the least need farther to insist upon them. What entertainment that peculiar doctrine, which I am in the consideration of, found in the following ages is that which I shall farther demonstrate.

After these was GREGORY I., who, lib. i. Epist. xcix., speaks to the same purpose with them in these words: "Redemptor noster, Dei hominumque mediator, conditionis humanæ non immemor, sic imis summa conjungit, ut ipse in unitate permanens ita temporalia, occulto instinctu, pia consulens moderatione disponat, quatenus de ejus manu antiquus hostis nullatenus rapiat, quos ante secula intra sinum matris ecclesiæ adunandos esse præscivit; nam et si quisquam eorum inter quos degit, statibus motus ad tempus ut palmes titubet, radix tamen rectæ fidei, quæ ex occulto prodit, divino judicio virens manet, quæ accepto tempore fructum de se ostentare valeat, qui latebat." This is the sum of what we contend for,—namely, that all those whom God hath predestinated to be added to the church, receiving a saving faith, though they may be shaken, yet on that account the root abides firm, their faith never utterly perisheth, but in due time brings forth accepted fruits again.

And most expressive to our purpose is that discourse of his which you have, lib. xxxiv. Moral. cap. viii. Saith he, "Aurum, quod pravis diaboli persuasionibus quasi lutum sterni potuerit, aurum ante Dei oculos nunquam fuit, qui enim seduci quandoque non reversuri possunt, quasi habitam sanctitatem ante oculos hominum videntur amittere, sed eam ante oculos Dei nunquam habuerunt."

The exclusion of those from being true believers who may be seduced and fall away doth most eminently infer the perseverance of all them who are so.

Add unto these ŒCUMENIUS (though he be one of a later date), and these shall suffice for the period of time relating to the Pelagian controversy. Saith he, in Epist. ad Eph. cap. i. 14, Ὁ ἀῤῥαβὼν πιστοῦται τὸ ὅλον· τινὰ τοίνυν υἱοθεσίαν καὶ τὰ μύρια ἀγαθὰ πιστούμενος ὁ Θεὸς δέδωκεν ἀῤῥαβῶνα τῆς ἐπουρανίου κληρονομίας τὸ Ἅγιον Πνεῦμα. All is confirmed and ratified by the earnest of the Spirit, that is given to them that believe.

Of those that lived after the days of the forementioned (I mean all of them but the last), that I may not cloy the reader, I shall not mention

any, until the business of divinity and the profession of it was taken up by the schoolmen and canonists; who, from a mixture of divine and human principles, framed the whole body of it anew, and gave it over into the possession of the present Romish church, moulded for the most part to the worldly, carnal interests of them on whom they had their dependency in their several generations.

But yet as there was none of those but, one way or other, was eminently conducing to the carrying on of the mystery of iniquity, by depraving, perverting, and corrupting, one truth or other of the gospel, so all of them did not in all things equally corrupt their ways, but gave some testimony more or less to some truths, as they received them from those that went before them. So fell it out in the matter of the grace of God and the corruption of the nature of man. Though some of them laboured to corrode and corrupt the ancient received doctrine thereof, so some, again, contended with all their might, in their way and by their arguments, to defend it; as is evident in the instance of Bradwardin crying out to God and man to help in the cause of God against the Pelagians in his days, in particular complaining of the great master of their divinity. So that notwithstanding all their corruptions, these ensuing principles passed currently amongst the most eminent of them as to the doctrine under consideration, which continue in credit with many of their sophistical successors to this day:—

1. That perseverance is a grace of God, bestowed according to predestination, or election, on men; that is, that God gives it to believers that are predestinated and elected.

2. That on whomsoever the grace of perseverance is bestowed, they do persevere to the end; and it is impossible in some sense that they should otherwise do.

3. That none who are not predestinate, what grace soever they may be made partakers of in this world, shall constantly continue to the end.

4. That no believer can by his own strength or power (incited or stirred up by what manlike or rational considerations soever) persevere in the faith, the grace of perseverance being a gift of God.

It is true, that, their judgments being perverted by sundry other corrupt principles, about the nature and efficacy of sacraments, with their conveyance of grace "ex opere operato," and out of ignorance of the righteousness of God and the real work of regeneration, they generally maintain (though Bradwardin punctually expressed himself to be of another mind) that many persons not predestinate may come to believe, yet fall away and perish.

Now, the truth is, it is properly no part of the controversy under consideration, whether, or how far, and in what sense, men, by reason of the profession and participation of ordinances, with the work and effect of common grace upon them, may be said to be true believers; but the whole, upon the matter of what we plead for, is comprised in the assertions now ascribed to them: which that it is done upon sufficient grounds will be manifest by calling in some few of the most eminent of them, to speak in their own words what their thoughts were in this matter.

To bring them in, I desire that one who (though none of them) was eminent in his undertakings for a mixture of divinity and law, in those days wherein they had their eminent rise and original, may be heard; and that is GRATIAN, who after his manner hath collected many things to the purpose in hand. P. 2, c. 33, q. 3, De Pœnit. Dist., can. 2, "Charitas," saith he, "est juncta Deo inseparabiliter, et unita, et in omnibus semper

invicta." And, "Electi quippe sic ad bonum tendunt, ut ad mala perpetranda non redeant; et, potest discursus, et mobilitas spiritûs sic intelligi. In sanctorum quippe cordibus juxta quasdam virtutes semper permanet; juxta quasdam vero recessurus venit, venturus recedit: in fide etenim, et spe, et charitate, et bonis aliis, sine quibus ad cœlestem patriam non potest veniri (sicut est humilitas, castitas, justitia, atque misericordia) perfectorum corda non deserit: in prophetiæ vero virtute, doctrinæ facundia, miraculorum exhibitione, suis aliquando adest, aliquando se subtrahit." Answering the objection of the Spirit's departure from them on whom he is bestowed, he distinguisheth of the respects upon the account whereof he may be said so to do. "In respect of some common gifts," saith he, "he may withdraw himself from them on whom he is bestowed; but not in respect of habitual sanctifying grace."

Among the schoolmen, there is none of greater name and eminency, for learning, devotion, and subtilty, than our BRADWARDIN, who was proctor of this university in the year 1325, and obtained by general consent the title of Doctor Profundus. Lib. ii., De Causa Dei, cap. viii., this profoundly learned doctor proposes this thesis, to be confirmed in the following chapter: "Quod nullus viator, quantacunque gratia creata subnixus, solius liberi arbitrii viribus, vel etiam cum adjutorio gratiæ, possit perseverare finaliter, sine alio Dei auxilio speciali." In the long disputation following, he disputes out of the Scriptures and ancient writers, abundantly cited to his purpose, that there is no possibility of the perseverance of any believer in the faith to the end upon such helps, considerations, and advantages, as Mr Goodwin proposeth as the only means thereof; that perseverance itself is a gift of God, without which gift and grace none can persevere. And the specialty of that grace he expresseth in the corollary wherewith he closeth the chapter, which is, "Quod nullus viator, solius liberi arbitrii, vel gratiæ viribus, aut amborum conjunctim, sine alio Dei auxilio speciali, potest perseverare per aliquod tempus omnino;" farther asserting the efficacy of special grace in and for every good work whatever. His arguments and testimonies I shall not need to recite; they are at hand to those who desire to consult them.

After the vindication of the former thesis, cap. ix., x., xi., he proposeth farther this proposition, to a right understanding of the doctrine of perseverance: "Quod perseverantia non est aliquod donum Dei creatum, a charitate, et gratia realiter differens." And the corollary wherewith he shuts up that disputation is: "Quod nomen perseverantiæ nullam rem absolutam essentialiter significat, sed accidentaliter et relative; charitatem videlicet, sive justitiam cum respectu futuræ permansionis usque in finem, et quod non improbabiliter posset dici perseverantiam esse ipsam relationem hujus."

After this, knowing well what conclusion would easily be inferred from these principles,—namely, That perseverance is not really distinct from faith and love, that it is such a grace and gift of God that whosoever it is bestowed upon shall certainly persevere, namely, that every one who hath received true grace, faith and love, shall certainly persevere,—he objects that to himself, and plainly grants it to be so indeed, cap. xii. And to make the matter more clear, cap. xiii., he disputes, that "Auxilium sine quo nullus perseverat, et per quod quilibet perseverat, est Spiritus Sanctus, divina bonitas et voluntas." Every cause of bringing sinful man to God is called by them "auxilium." In these three, "Spiritus Sanctus, divina bonitas, et voluntas," he compriseth the chief causes of perseverance, as I have also done in the ensuing treatise. By "divina voluntas" he intends

God's eternal and immutable decree, as he manifests, cap. viii., ix., whither he sends his reader; his "divina bonitas" is that free grace whereby God accepts and justifies us as his; "Spiritus Sanctus" is sanctification: so that he affirms the perseverance of the saints to consist in the stability of their acceptation with God, and continuance of their sanctification from him, upon the account of his unchangeable purposes and decrees; which is the sum of what we contend for.

And this is part of the doctrine concerning the grace of God, and his sovereignty over the wills of men, which Bradwardin in his days cried out so earnestly for the defence of to God and man against the Pelagian encroachment, which was made upon it in those days. Thus he turns himself, in the conclusion of his book, to the pope and church of Rome, with zealous earnestness, for their interposition to the determination of these controversies. "Ut os inique loquentium," saith he, "obstruatur, flexis genibus cordis mei imploro ecclesiam, præcipue Romanam, quæ summa authoritate vigere dignoscitur, quatenus ipsa determinare dignetur, quid circa præmissas catholice sit tenendum. Non enim sine periculo in talibus erratur. Simon, dormis? exurge," speaking to the pope, "exime gladium, amputa quæque sinistra hæreticæ pravitatis, defende et protege catholicam veritatem. Porro etsi Dominus ipse in Petri naviculæ dormiat, nimietate tempestatis compulsus, ipsum quoque fiducialiter excitabo, quatenus Spiritus oris sui tempestate sedata tranquillum faciat et serenum. Absit autem, ut qui in prora hujus naviculæ pervigil laborabat, jam in puppi super cervicalia dormiat, vel dormitet," lib. iii. cap. liii.

With this earnestness, above three hundred years ago, did this profoundly learned man press the popes to a determination of these controversies against the Pelagians and their successors in his schools. The same suit hath ever since been continued by very many learned men (in every age) of the communion of the church of Rome, crying out for the papal definitive sentence against the Pelagian errors crept into their church; especially hath this outcry with supplication been renewed by the Dominican friars, ever since the Jesuits have so cunningly gilded over that Pelagian poison, and set it out as the best and most wholesome food for "holy mother" and her children. Yea, with such earnestness hath this been in the last age pursued by agents in the court of Rome, that (a congregation *de auxiliis* being purposely appointed) it was generally supposed one while that they would have prevailed in their suit, and have obtained a definitive sentence on their side against their adversaries. But through the just vengeance of God upon a pack of bloody, persecuting idolaters, giving them up more and more to the belief of lies, contrary almost to the expectation of all men, this very year, 1653, Pope Innocent X., who now wears the triple crown, conjured by the subtlety and dreadful interest of the Jesuits in all nations that as yet wonder after him, by a solemn bull, or papal consistorian determination, in the case of Jansenius, bishop of Ypres, hath turned the scales upon his first suppliants, and cast the cause on the Pelagian side. But of that whole business elsewhere.

I shall not perplex the reader with the horrid names of Trombet, Hilcot, Bricot, Sychet, Tartaret, Brulifer, nor with their more horrid terms and expressions. Let the one Angelical Doctor [*i.e.*, AQUINAS] answer for the rest of his companions.

That this man, then (one of the great masters of the crew), abode by the principles of him before insisted on, may quickly be made evident by some few instances clearing his judgment herein.

This, in the first place, he everywhere insists on, that no habitual grace

received, no improvement that can be made of it, by the utmost ability, diligence, and the most raised considerations of the best of men, will cause any one certainly to persevere, without the peculiar preservation of God. Of this he gives his reason, lib. iii. Contra Gent. Ca. 155, "Illud quod natura sua est variabile, ad hoc, quod figatur in uno, indiget auxilio alicujus moventis immobilis; sed liberum arbitrium etiam existentis in gratia habituali adhuc manet variabile, et flexibile a bono in malum; ergo ad hoc, quod figatur in bono et perseveret in illo, usque ad finem, indiget speciali Dei auxilio." An argument this of the same importance with that mentioned out of Bradwardin; which, howsoever at first appearance it may seem to lie at the outskirts of the controversy in hand, yet indeed is such as, being granted, hath an influence into the whole, as hath been manifested.

And this the same author farther confirms. Saith he, pp. q. 109, a. 9, "Cum nullum agens secundum agat nisi in virtute primi, sitque caro spiritui perpetuo rebellis; non potest homo licet jam gratiam consecutus, per seipsum operari bonum, et vitare peccatum, absque novo auxilio Dei, ipsum moventis, dirigentis, et protegentis; quamvis alia habitualis gratia ad hoc ei necessaria non sit." And the reasons he gives of this conclusion in the body of the article are considerable. This, saith he, must be so, "Primo quidem, ratione generali propter hoc, quod nulla res creata potest in quemcunque actum prodire, nisi virtute motionis divinæ." The Pelagian self-sufficiency and exemption from dependence "in solidum" upon God, both providentially and physically as to operation, was not so freely received in the schools as afterward. "Secundo," saith he, "ratione speciali, propter conditionem status humanæ naturæ, quæ quidem licet per gratiam sanetur, quantum ad mentem, remanet tamen in eo corruptio, et infectio quantum ad carnem, per quam servit legi peccati, ut dicitur, Rom. vii. Remanet etiam quædam ignorantiæ obscuritas in intellectu, secundum quam (ut etiam dicitur, Rom. viii.) 'quid oremus sicut oportet nescimus:' ideo necesse est nobis, ut a Deo dirigamur et protegamur, qui omnia novit, et omnia potest." And will not this man, think you, in his gropings after light, when darkness covered the face of the earth, and thick darkness was upon the inhabitants thereof, with this his discovery,—of the impotency of the best of the saints for perseverance upon the account of any grace received, because of the perpetual powerful rebellion of indwelling lust and corruption, and that all that do persevere are preserved by the power of God unto salvation,—rise in judgment against those who in our days, wherein the Sun of Righteousness is risen with healing under his wings, do ascribe a sufficiency unto men in themselves, upon the bottom of their rational considerations, to abide with God, or persevere to the end?

And this assertion of the Angelical Doctor is notably confirmed by Didacus Alvarez in his vindication of it from the exception of Medina, that we make use of habits when we will, and if men will make use of their habitual grace, they may persevere without relation to any after grace of God. Saith he, "Respondetur, habitibus quidem nos uti cum volumus, sed ut velimus illis uti, prærequiritur motio Dei efficax, præmovens liberum arbitrium, ut utatur habitu ad operandum, et operetur bonum, præsertim quando habitus sunt supernaturales; quia cum pertineant ad superiorem ordinem, habent specialem rationem, propter quam potentia mere naturalis non utitur eisdem habitibus, nisi speciali Dei auxilio moveatur," Alvar. De Aux. lib. x. disput. 100. Though received graces are reckoned by him as supernatural habits, yet such as we act not by, nor with, but from new supplies from God.

Having laid down this principle, Thomas proceeds to manifest that

there is a special grace of perseverance bestowed by God on some, and that on whomsoever it is bestowed, they certainly and infallibly persevere to the end, pp. quest. 109, a. 10, c.; and Contra Gent. lib. iii., he proves this assertion from p. 6, 1 Pet. v. 10; Ps. xvi.

But, to spare the reader, I shall give you this man's judgment, together with one of his followers, who hath had the happiness to clear his master's mind above any that have undertaken the maintenance of his doctrine in that part now controverted in the church of Rome; and therein I shall manifest (what I formerly proposed) what beamings and irradiations of this truth do yet glide through that gross darkness which is spread upon the face of the Romish synagogue;—referring what I have farther to add on this head to the account which, God assisting, I shall ere long give of the present Jansenian controversies, in my considerations on Mr Biddle's catechisms, a task by authority lately imposed on me. This is Didacus Alvarez, whose 10th book De Auxiliis treats peculiarly of this subject of perseverance. In the entrance of his disputation, he lays down the same principles with the former concerning the necessity of the peculiar grace of perseverance, to the end that any one may persevere, disp. 103.

Then, disp. 108, he farther manifests that this gift or grace of perseverance does not depend on any conditions in us, or any co-operation of our wills. His position he lays down in these words: "Donum perseverantiæ, in ratione doni perseverantiæ, et efficacia illius, nullo modo dependet effective ex libera co-operatione nostri arbitrii, sed a solo Deo, atque ab efficacia, et absoluto decreto voluntatis ejus, qui pro sua misericordia tribuit illud donum cui vult." In the farther proof of this proposition, he manifests by clear testimonies that the contrary doctrine hereunto was that of the Pelagians and semi-Pelagians, which Austin opposed in sundry treatises. And in all the arguments whereby he farther confirms it, he still presses the absurdity of making the promise of God concerning perseverance conditional, and so suspending it on any thing in and by us to be performed. And, indeed, all the acts whereby we persevere flowing, according to him, from the grace of perseverance, it cannot but be absurd to make the efficient cause in its efficiency and operation to depend upon its own effect. This also is with him ridiculous, that the grace of perseverance should be given to any and he not persevere, or be promised and yet not given; yet withal he grants, in his following conclusions, that our wills, secondarily and in dependency, do co-operate in our perseverance.

The second principle this learned schoolman insists on is, that this gift of perseverance is peculiar to the elect, or predestinate: Disput. 104. 1, Con. "Donum perseverantiæ est proprium prædestinatorum, ut nulli alteri conveniat." And what he intends by "prædestinati," he informs you according to the judgment of Austin and Thomas: "Nomine prædestinationis ad gloriam, solum eam prædestinationem intelligunt (Augustinus et Thomas) qua electi ordinantur efficaciter, et transmittuntur ad vitam æternam; cujus effectus sunt vocatio, justificatio, et perseverantia in gratia usque ad finem." Not that (or such a) conditional predestination as is pendent in the air, and expectant of men's good final deportment; but that which is the eternal, free fountain of all that grace whereof in time by Jesus Christ we are made partakers.

And in the pursuit of this proposition, he farther proves at large that the perseverance given to the saints in Christ is not a supplement of helps and advantages, whereby they may preserve it if they will, but such as causes them on whom it is bestowed certainly and actually so to do; and that, in its efficacy and operation, it cannot depend on any free co-opera-

tion of our wills, all the good acts tending to our perseverance being fruits of that grace which is bestowed on us, according to the absolute unchangeable decree of the will of God.

This, indeed, is common with this author and the rest of his associates (the Dominicans and present Jansenians) in these controversies, together with the residue of the Romanists, that having their judgments wrested by the abominable figments of implicit faith, and the efficacy of the sacraments of the new testament, conveying, and really exhibiting, the grace signified or sealed by them, they are enforced to grant that many may be, and are, regenerated and made true believers who are not predestinated, and that these cannot persevere, nor shall eventually be saved. Certain it is, that there is not any truth which that generation of men do receive and admit, but more or less it suffers in their hands, from that gross ignorance of the free grace of God in Jesus Christ, the power whereof they are practically under. What the poor vassals and slaves will do upon the late bull of their holy father, casting them in sundry main concernments of their quarrel with their adversaries, is uncertain. Otherwise, setting aside some such deviations as the above mentioned, whereunto they are enforced by their ignorance of the grace and justification which is in Jesus Christ, there is so much of ancient candid truth, in opposition to the Pelagians and semi-Pelagians, preserved and asserted in the writings of the Dominican friars, as will rise up, as I said before, in judgment against those of our days who, enjoying greater light and advantages, do yet close in with those, and are long since cursed enemies of the grace of God.

To this Dominican I shall only add the testimony of two famous Jesuits, upon whose understandings the light of this glorious truth prevailed, for an acknowledgment of it. The first of these is BELLARMINE, whose disputes to this purpose being full and large, and the author in all men's hands, I shall not transcribe his assertions and arguments; but only refer the reader to his lib. ii., De Grat. et Lib. Arbit. cap. xii., "Denique ut multa alia testimonia," etc. The other is SUAREZ, who delivers his thoughts succinctly upon the whole of this matter. Lib. xi. De Perpetuitat. vel Amis. Grat. cap. ii., sect. 6, saith he, "De prædestinatis verum est infallibiliter, quod gratiam finaliter seu in perpetuum non amittunt; unde postquam semel gratiam habuerant, ita reguntur et proteguntur a Deo, ut vel non cadant, vel si ceciderint resurgant; et licet sæpius cadant et resurgant, tandem aliquando ita resurgunt ut amplius non cadant." In which few words he hath briefly comprised the sum of that which is by us contended for.

It was in my thoughts in the last place to have added the concurrent witness of all the reformed churches, with that of the most eminent divines, which have written in the defence of their concessions, but this trouble, upon second consideration, I shall spare the reader and myself; for as many other reasons lie against the prosecuting of this design, so especially the uselessness of spending time and pains for the demonstration of a thing of so evident a truth prevails with me to desist. Notwithstanding the endeavours of Mr Goodwin to wrest the words of some of the most ancient writers who laboured in the first reformation of the churches, I presume no unprejudiced person in the least measure acquainted with the system of that doctrine which, with so much pains, diligence, piety, and learning, they promoted in the world, with the clearness of their judgments in going forth to the utmost compass of their principles which they received, and their constancy to themselves in asserting of the truths they embraced,—owned by their friends and adversaries until such time as Mr Goodwin

discovered their self-contradictions,—will scarce be moved once to question their judgments by the excerpta of Mr Goodwin, chap. xv. of his treatise; so that of this discourse this is the issue.

There remains only that I give a brief account of some concernments of the ensuing treatise, and dismiss the reader from any farther attendance in the porch or entrance thereof.

The title of the book speaks of the aim and method of it. The confutation of Mr Goodwin was but secondarily in my eye; and the best way for that I judged to consist in a full scriptural confirmation of the truth he opposed. That I chiefly intended; and therein I hope the pious reader may, through the grace of God, meet with satisfaction. In my undertaking to affirm the truth of what I assert, the thing itself first, and then the manifestation of it, were in my consideration. For the thing itself, my arguing hath been to discover the nature of it, its principles and causes, its relation to the good-will of the Father, the mediation of the Son, and dispensation of the Holy Ghost to the saints thereupon; and its use and tendency in and unto that fellowship with the Father and the Son whereunto we are called and admitted.

As to the manner of its revelation, the proper seats of it in the book of God, the occasion of the delivery thereof in several seasons, the significant expressions wherein it is set forth, and the receiving of it by them to whom it was revealed, have been diligently remarked.

In those parts of the discourse which tend to the vindication of the arguments from Scripture whereby the truth pleaded for is confirmed, of the usefulness of the thing itself contended about, etc., I have been, I hope, careful to keep my discourse from degenerating into jangling and strife of words (the usual issue of polemical writings), being not altogether ignorant of the devices of Satan, and the usual carnal attendancies of such proceedings. The weight of the truth in hand, the common interest of all the saints in their walking with God therein, sense of my own duty, and the near approach of the account which I must make of the ministration to me committed, have given bounds and limits to my whole discourse, as to the manner of handling the truth therein asserted. Writing in the common language of the nation about the common possession of the saints, the meanest and weakest as well as the wisest and the most learned, labouring in the work of Christ and his gospel, I durst not hide the understanding of what I aimed at by mingling the plain doctrine of the Scripture with metaphysical notions, expressions of art, or any pretended ornaments of wit or fancy; because I fear God. For the more sublime consideration of things, and such a way of their delivery as, depending upon the acknowledged reception of sundry arts and sciences, which the generality of Christians neither are nor need to be acquainted withal, scholars may communicate their thoughts and apprehensions unto and among themselves, and that upon the stage of the world, in that language whereunto they have consented for and to that end and purpose. That I have carefully abstained from personal reflections, scoffs, undervaluations, applications of stories and old sayings, to the provocation of the spirit of them with whom I have to do, I think not at all praiseworthy, because, upon a review of some passages in the treatise (now irrecoverable), I fear I have scarce been so careful as I am sure it was my duty to have been.

NOTE BY THE EDITOR.

See page 27.

To remove from the preceding preface the appearance of confusion which it presents, it is enough to remark, that in the course of citing testimonies in proof that his views on the subject of the perseverance of the saints had the sanction of antiquity, Owen, after a passing blow at the Clementine Constitutions, proceeds not only to impugn the integrity of the Ignatian Epistles, but to assail the reasonings of Dr Hammond in support of Episcopacy. On the former point, admitting generally that the documents known by the name of the Epistles of Ignatius might contain much that was the production of that early martyr, Owen represents them as so adulterated that no valid inference can be drawn from their contents His reasons are, that high authorities, such as Vedelius, who brought out the Genevan edition of them, Calvin, De Saumaise, Blondel, the Magdeburg Centuriators, and Whitaker, had pronounced much of them to be spurious; that they contained passages from the Clementine Constitutions, a forgery, and of a date subsequent to the age of Ignatius; that the passages quoted from them by Theodoret and Jerome do not accord with, or rather do not exist in, the version of them extant; that the style of them is replete with turgid expressions, inconsistent with the simplicity of the early Christian writers; that Latin words occur in them, not likely to be employed by a Syrian like Ignatius; and that they contain expressions of overweening deference to the hierarchy, a species of government not in existence in the time of Ignatius. On such grounds, our author holds that these epistles resemble those children of the Jews by their strange wives, who "spake part the language of Ashdod, and part the language of the Jews."

No doubt exists that Ignatius was the author of some epistles warning the church of his day against heretical opinions, which had begun to disturb its unity and peace; and early fathers of the church, Polycarp, Irenæus, Theophilus of Antioch, Origen, and Eusebius, make specific allusion to these epistles. The question is, What epistles are to be regarded as the genuine writings of Ignatius among three different collections purporting to be such; first, *twelve* epistles in Greek and Latin, with a *long and expanded text;* secondly, *eleven* epistles in Greek and Latin, of which *seven* are in a *shorter text;* and lastly, the *three* epistles in Syriac published by Mr Cureton, of which the text is *shorter* even than that of the last-mentioned collection?

From the strong support which many expressions in the first and second of these recensions lend to the hierarchical element in church-government, these documents were of importance in the controversy between Presbyterians and Episcopalians. While the text was yet unsettled, and different editions were issuing from the press,—one by Vedelius in 1623, giving seven Greek epistles, corresponding in *name* to those mentioned by Eusebius; another by Usher in 1644; another by Vossius in 1646, giving eight epistles, with part of a ninth, founded on a manuscript discovered at Florence, and hence designated the Medicean Greek text,—certain writers, such as Claude de Saumaise (1641) and Blondel (1646), laboured to prove that these epistles bore traces of an age posterior to Ignatius. Dr Hammond (1651), in four dissertations, replied to them, defending the genuineness of the epistles, and episcopal government. It is in answer to this last work that Owen wrote the animadversions which form the digression in his preface to his work on the Perseverance of the Saints. Hammond published a rejoinder, in his "Answer to Animadversions on the Dissertations touching Ignatius' Epistles," etc.

The most important contributions to this controversy followed, and with them for a time it ceased. Daillé, in 1666, published a learned work, designed, according to the title-page, to prove three things,—that the epistles were spurious, that they were written after the time of Ignatius, and that they were of no higher authority than "The Cardinal Works of Christ," a production commonly inserted among the remains of Cyprian. In 1672, Pearson, afterwards bishop of Chester, published his "Vindiciæ Epistolarum S. Ignatii,"—long deemed conclusive by those who were in favour of the genuineness of the epistles, in spite of an able anonymous reply by Larroque in 1674, and the doubts that continued to be felt by many scholars who had made the epistles the subject of keen and critical investigation.

From this point no advance was made in the discussion, some authors contending for the long recension and some for the shorter, till the conjecture of Usher respecting the

probability of a Syriac manuscript was verified, by the discovery of a Syriac version of the Epistle to Polycarp among some ancient manuscripts, procured by Archdeacon Tattam, in 1838 or 1839, from a monastery in the Desert of Nitria. Mr Cureton, who discovered the epistle among these manuscripts, set on foot a new search for other manuscripts. The result was, that the archdeacon, by a second expedition to Egypt, brought home in 1843 three entire epistles in Syriac, to Polycarp, to the Ephesians, and to the Romans. M. Pacho secured possession of another copy in 1847, which afterwards came under the examination of Mr Cureton.

It is the opinion of Mr Cureton and Chevalier Bunsen that these three Syriac epistles are the only genuine writings of Ignatius;—because the Syriac manuscript, transcribed most probably before A D 550, is of greater antiquity than any existing Greek manuscripts:—the epistles in Syriac are shorter than the same epistles as published by Usher in the Medicean text, while the sense comes out more clearly, from the omission of the parts found only in the Greek manuscripts;—passages in the latter, to which objections have been urged, as containing allusions to heresies (Valentinianism, for example) subsequent to the time of Ignatius, and sentences insisting on a superstitious deference to the hierarchy, do not appear in the Syriac; from which it would follow, either that these passages are spurious, and inserted since the time of the Syriac translator, or that he anticipated the objections of modern criticism, and confirmed them as just by deleting these passages;—there is perfect uniformity in the style of so much of these epistles in Greek as corresponds with the three Syriac epistles, while the discrepancy of style existing in the Greek recensions between the Epistle to Polycarp and the rest, the difference of matter in the Epistle to the Romans (in the Greek six times longer than in the Syriac), and the peculiar complexion of two chapters in the Epistle to the Trallians, transferred, as it now appears, from the Epistle to the Romans, had all been noticed previous to the discovery of the Syriac manuscripts, and had thrown an air of suspicion over all the epistles;—and the three epistles in the Syriac collection are the only epistles for which the evidence of antiquity, in the shape of testimonies and allusions in the writings of the early fathers, can be cited for upwards of two centuries after the death of Ignatius

On the other hand, it has been argued that the Syriac version is probably an epitome of the Greek epistles; that such abridgments were common in ancient times; that the scope and sense is more clear in the Greek than in the Syriac; that a manuscript printed by Mr Cureton is a Syriac abridgment of these epistles, differing from that of the three considered by him to be genuine; that the events and opinions which seem to indicate a later age than that of the martyr may be explained by reference to his age; that in the third century quotations are found from all the epistles; and that Eusebius expressly names and describes seven epistles, a testimony repeated by Jerome.

At present the amount of evidence seems in favour of the three Syriac epistles, as all the genuine remains of Ignatius we possess. It is possible that Syriac manuscripts of the other epistles may be discovered, although the claim of the former to be not only paramount but exclusive has been argued with great force, on the ground that had the latter existed, they would certainly have been the subject of appeal in many controversies by many fathers who utterly ignore them, as well as from the closing words of the recently discovered manuscripts, "Here end the three epistles of Ignatius, bishop and martyr." Meanwhile it is satisfactory to know that the Syriac version leaves the argument for the authenticity and genuineness of the Scriptures very nearly where it stood. It contains references to two of the Gospels, to the Acts of the Apostles, and to five of Paul's Epistles. Both the Epistles of Ignatius to the Ephesians and to the Romans, in the Syriac version, assert distinctly the Godhead of Christ.

But how fares the question of ecclesiastical polity,—the point which brought these epistles into dispute between Owen and Hammond,—by the discovery of the Syriac manuscript? All the passages in favour of the hierarchy disappear in it, except the following from the Epistle to Polycarp, "Look to the bishop, that God also may look upon you. I will be instead of the souls of those who are subject to the bishop, and the presbyters, and the deacons." Are we to say here, like Neander in reference to all the Greek epistles, with the exception of the one to the Romans, which he admitted to possess greater marks of originality than the others, "a hierarchical purpose is not to be mistaken," to pronounce it an interpolation, or challenge the authenticity of the Syriac document? or are we to admit its genuineness, and accept it as evidence that Episcopacy dates so early as the time of Ignatius? or are we to question the import of the term "bishop," so as to make it quadrate with Congregational or Presbyterian views? But these questions, while they illustrate the present state of the controversy, are beyond our province.—Ed.

THE DOCTRINE OF THE SAINTS' PERSEVERANCE EXPLAINED AND CONFIRMED.

CHAPTER I.

THE STATE OF THE CONTROVERSY.

The various thoughts of men concerning the doctrine proposed to consideration—The great concernment of it, however stated, on all hands confessed—Some special causes pressing to the present handling of it—The fearful backsliding of many in these days—The great offence given and taken thereby, with the provision made for its removal—The nature of that offence and temptation thence arising considered—Answer to some arguings of Mr G., chap. ix., from thence against the truth proposed—The use of trials and shakings—Grounds of believers' assurance that they are so—The same farther argued and debated—Of the testimony of a man's own conscience concerning his uprightness, and what is required thereunto—1 John iii. 7 considered—Of the rule of self-judging, with principles of settlement for true believers, notwithstanding the apostasies of eminent professors—Corrupt teachings rendering the handling of this doctrine necessary—Its enemies of old and of late—The particular undertaking of Mr G. proposed to consideration—An entrance into the stating of the question—The terms of the question explained—Of holiness in its several acceptations—Created holiness, original or adventitious, complete or inchoate—Typical by dedication, real by purification—Holiness evangelical, either so indeed or by estimation—Real holiness partial or universal—The partakers of the first, or temporary believers, not true believers, maintained against Mr G.—Ground of judging professors to be true believers—Matt. vii. 20 considered—What is the rule of judging men therein given—What knowledge of the faith of others is to be obtained—What is meant by perseverance: how in Scripture it is expressed—The grounds of it pointed at—What is intended by falling away—Whether it be possible the Spirit of grace may be lost, or the habit of it, and how—The state of the controversy as laid down by Mr G.—The vanity thereof discovered—His judgment about believers' falling away examined—What principles and means of perseverance he grants to them—The enemies of our perseverance—Indwelling sin in particular considered—No possibility of preservation upon Mr G.'s grounds demonstrated—The means and ways of the saints' preservation in faith, as asserted by Mr G., at large examined, weighed, and found light—The doctrine of the saints' perseverance, and way of teaching it, cleared from Isa. iv.—That chapter opened—The 5th verse particularly insisted on and discussed—The whole state and method of the controversy thence educed.

THE truth which I have proposed to handle, and whose defence I have undertaken in the ensuing discourse, is commonly called THE

PERSEVERANCE OF SAINTS; a doctrine whereof nothing ordinary, low, or common, is spoken by any that have engaged into the consideration of it. To some it is the very salt of the covenant of grace, the most distinguishing mercy communicated in the blood of Christ, so interwoven into, and lying at the bottom of, all that consolation which "God is abundantly willing that all the heirs of the promise should receive," that it is utterly impossible it should be safe-guarded one moment without a persuasion of this truth, which seals up all the mercy and grace of the new covenant with the unchangeableness and faithfulness of God.[1] To others it is no grace of God, no part of the purchase of Christ, no doctrine of the gospel, no foundation of consolation; but an invention of men, a delusion of Satan, an occasion of dishonour to God, disconsolation and perplexity to believers, a powerful temptation unto sin and wickedness in all that do receive it.[2]

A doctrine it is, also, whose right apprehension is on all hands confessed to be of great importance, upon the account of that effectual influence which it hath, and will have, into our walking with God;—which, say some, is to *love humility, thankfulness, fear, fruitfulness*;[3] to *folly, stubbornness, rebellion, dissoluteness, negligence*, say others. The great confidence expressed by men concerning the evidence and certainty of their several persuasions, whether defending or opposing the doctrine under consideration,—the one part professing the truth thereof to be of equal stability with the promises of God, and most plentifully delivered in the Scripture; others (at least one, who is thought to be *pars magna* of his companions), that if it be asserted in any place of the Scripture, it were enough to make wise and impartial men to call the authority thereof into question,—must needs invite men to turn aside to see about what this earnest contest is. And *quis is est tam potens*, who dares thus undertake to remove not only ancient landmarks and boundaries of doctrines among the saints, but "mountains of brass" and the "hills about Jerusalem," which we hoped would stand fast for ever? The concernment, then, of the glory of God, and the honour of the Lord Jesus Christ, with the interest of the souls of the saints, being so wrapped up, and that confessedly on all hands, in the doctrine proposed, I am not out of hope that the plain discoursing of it from the word of truth may be as "a word in season," like "apples of gold in pictures of silver."

Moreover, besides the general importance of that doctrine in all times and seasons, the wretched practices of many in the days wherein we live, and the industrious attempts of others in their teachings, for

[1] Jude 1; 2 Cor. xiii. 8; Isa. iv. 5, 6; Jer. xxxi. 31–34, xxxii. 39, 40; Isa. lix. 21; Heb. viii. 10–12; 1 Cor. i. 9; Phil. i. 6; Rom. viii. 32–35.

[2] Pelag. Armin. Socin. Papist. Thomson de Intercis. Justif. Diatrib. Bertius Apost. Sanct. Remonst. Coll. Hag. Scripta Synod.

[3] Gen. xvii. 1; Ps. xxiii. 6; Phil. ii. 12, 13; Heb. x. 19–22; 2 Cor. vii. 1; 2 Pet. i. 3–7, etc.

the subverting and casting it down from its excellency and that place which it hath long held in the churches of Christ and hearts of all the saints of God, have rendered the consideration of it at this time necessary.

For the first, these are days wherein we have as sad and tremendous examples of apostasy, backsliding, and falling from high and glorious pitches in profession, as any age can parallel;—as many stars cast from heaven, as many trees plucked up by the roots, as many stately buildings, by wind, rain, and storm, cast to the ground, as many sons of perdition discovered, as many washed swine returning to their mire, as many Demases going after the present evil world, and men going out from the church which were never truly and properly of it, as many sons of the morning and children of high illumination and gifts setting in darkness, and that of all sorts, as ever in so short a space of time since the name of Christ was known upon the earth.[1] What through the deviating of some to the ways of the world and the lusts of the flesh, what of others to spiritual wickednesses and abominations, it is seldom that we see a professor to hold out in the glory of his profession to the end. I shall not now discourse of the particular causes hereof, with the temptations and advantages of Satan that seem to be peculiar to this season; but only thus take notice of the thing itself, as that which presseth for and rendereth the consideration of the doctrine proposed not only seasonable but necessary.

That this is a stumbling-block in the way of them that seek to walk with God, I suppose none of them will deny. It was so of old, and it will so continue until the end. And therefore our Saviour, predicting and discoursing of the like season, Matt. xxiv., foretelling that "many should be deceived," verse 11, that "iniquity should abound," and "the love of many wax cold," verse 12,—that is, visibly and scandalously, to the contempt and seeming disadvantage of the gospel,—adds, as a preservative consolation to his own chosen, select ones, who might be shaken in their comfort and confidence to see so many that walked to the house of God and took sweet counsel together with them, to fall headlong to destruction, that the elect shall not be seduced. Let the attempts of seducers be what they will, and their advantages never so many, or their successes never so great, they shall be preserved; the house upon the rock shall not be cast down; against the church built on Christ the gates of hell shall not prevail. And Paul mentioning the apostasy of Hymeneus and Philetus, who seem to have been teachers of some eminency, and stars of some considerable magnitude in the firmament of the church, with the eversion of the faith of some who attended unto their abo-

[1] Rev. xii. 4; Jude 12; Matt. vii. 26, 27; 2 Thess. ii. 3; 2 Pet. ii. 20–22; 2 Tim. iv. 10; 1 John ii. 19; Heb. vi. 4–6.

minations, 2 Tim. ii. 17, 18, lest any disconsolation should surprise believers in reference to their own condition, as though that should be lubricous, uncertain, and such as might end in destruction and their faith in an overthrow, he immediately adds that effectual cordial for the reviving and supportment of their confidence and comfort, verse 19, "Nevertheless" (notwithstanding all this apostasy of eminent professors, yet) "the foundation of God standeth sure, The Lord knoweth them that are his;"—"Those who are built upon the foundation of his unchangeable purpose and love shall not be prevailed against." John likewise doth the same; for having told his little children that there were many antichrists abroad in the world, and they for the most part apostates, he adds in his First Epistle, ii. 19, "They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us." He lets them know that by their being apostates, they had proved themselves to have been but hypocrites; and therefore believers' dwelling in safety was no way prejudiced by their backsliding. The like occasion now calls for the like application, and the same disease for the same prevention or remedy. That no sound persons may be shaken, because unhealthy ones are shattered,—that those may not tremble who are built on the rock, because those are cast down who are built on the sand,—is one part of my aim and intendment in handling this doctrine; and therefore I shall as little dabble in the waters of strife, or insist upon it in way of controversy, as the importunity of the adversary and that truth which we are obliged to contend for will permit. One Scripture, in its own plainness and simplicity, will be of more use for the end I aim at than twenty scholastical arguments, pressed with never so much accurateness and subtilty.

A temptation, then, this is, and hath been of old, to the saints, disposed of by the manifold wisdom of God to stir them up to "take heed lest they fall;" to put them upon trying and examining "whether Christ be in them or no;" and also to make out to those fountains of establishment, in his eternal purpose and gracious promises, wherein their refreshments and reserves under such temptations do lie.[1] And though our doctrine enforces us to conclude all such never to be sound believers, in that peculiar notion and sense of that expression which shall instantly be declared, who totally and finally apostatize and fall off from the ways of God, yet is it exceedingly remote from being any true ground of shaking the faith of those who truly believe, any farther than shaking is useful for the right and thorough performance of that great gospel duty of trial and self-examination.

[1] Rom. xi. 20; 1 Cor. x. 12, xi. 28; 2 Cor. xiii. 5; Rev. ii. 24, 26; Isa. xlv. 22; Mal. iii. 6; 2 Pet. iii. 17; Heb. iii. 12; Hab. iii. 17, 18.

Mr Goodwin indeed contends, chap. ix. sect 8–11, pp. 108–110, "That if we judge all such as fall away to perdition never to have been true believers" (that is, with such a faith as bespeaks them to enjoy union with Christ and acceptance with God), "it will administer a thousand fears and jealousies concerning the soundness of a man's own faith, whether that be sound or no; and so it will be indifferent as to consolation whether true believers may fall away or no, seeing it is altogether uncertain whether a man hath any of that true faith which cannot perish."

Ans. But, first, God, who hath promised to make "all things work together for good to them that love him," in his infinite love and wisdom is pleased to exercise them with great variety, both within and without, in reference to themselves and others, for the accomplishing towards them all the good pleasure of his goodness, and carrying them on in that holy, humble, depending frame, which is needful for the receiving from him those gracious supplies without which it is impossible they should be preserved. To this end are they often exposed to winnowings of fierce winds, and shakings by more dreadful blasts than any breaths in this consideration of the apostatizing of professors, though of eminency. Not that God is delighted with their fears and jealousies, which yet he knows under such dispensations they must conflict withal, but with the trial and exercise of their graces whereunto he calls them; that is, his glory, wherein his soul is delighted. It is no singular thing for the saints of God to be exercised with a thousand fears and jealousies, and through them to grow to great establishment. If, indeed, they were such as were unconquerable, such as did not work together for their good, such as must needs be endless, all means of satisfaction and establishment being rescinded by the causes of them, then were there weight in this exception; but neither the Scriptures nor the experience of the saints of God do give the least hint to such an assertion.[1]

Secondly, It is denied that the fall of the most glorious hypocrites is indeed an efficacious engine in the hands of the adversary to ingenerate any other fears and jealousies, or to expose them to any other shakings, than what are common to them in other temptations of daily incursion, from which God doth constantly make a way for them to escape, 1 Cor. x. 13. It is true, indeed, that if true believers had no other foundation of their persuasion that they are so but what occurs visibly to the observation of men in the outward conversation of them that yet afterward fall totally away, the apostasy

[1] Rom. viii. 28; Ps. xxx. 6, 7; Isa. viii. 17, liv. 7–10; 1 Pet. i. 7; 1 Cor. iii. 13; 1 Pet. iv. 12; 2 Cor. vii. 5; 2 Thess. i. 11; Heb. xii. 25, 28, 29; Isa. lvii. 15, lxvi. 2; James iv. 6; 1 Pet. v. 5; Matt. vii. 24, 25; Amos ix. 9; Luke xxii. 31; Eph. vi. 10–18, iv 14; Isa. xlix. 14–16, lxiii. 9; Acts ix. 5; Ps. ciii. 13; 1 Pet. i. 7; Rom. viii. 38, 39.

of such (notwithstanding the general assurance they have that those who are born of God cannot, shall not sin unto death, 1 John iii. 9, seeing their own interest in that estate and condition may be clouded, at least for a season, and their consolation thereupon depending interrupted) might occasion thoughts in them of very sad consideration; but whilst, besides all the beams and rays that ever issued from a falling star, all the leaves and blossoms with abortive fruit that ever grew on an unrooted tree, all the goodly turrets and ornaments of the fairest house that ever was built on the sand, there are moreover "three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, and three that bear witness in earth, the spirit, and the water, and the blood,"—whilst there is a teaching, anointing, and assuring earnest, a firm sealing to the day of redemption, a knowledge that we are passed from death to life,[1]—the temptation arising from the apostasy of hypocrites is neither so potent nor unconquerable but that, by the grace of Him through whom we can do all things, it may be very well dealt withal. This I say, supposing the ordinary presence and operation of the Spirit of grace in the hearts of believers, with such shines of God's countenance upon them as they usually enjoy. Let these be interrupted or turned aside, and there is not the least blast or breath that proceeds from the mouth of the weakest enemy they have to deal withal but is sufficient to cast them down from the excellency of their joy and consolation, Ps. xxx. 6, 7.

The evidence of this truth is such that Mr Goodwin is forced to say, "Far be it from me to deny but that a man may very possibly attain unto a very strong and potent assurance, and that upon grounds every way sufficiently warrantable and good, that his faith is sound and saving,"[2] cap. ix. sect. 9. But unto this concession he puts in a double exception:—

First, "That there is not one true believer of a hundred, yea, of many thousands, who hath any such assurance of his faith as is built upon solid and pregnant foundations."

I must, by his leave, enter my dissent hereunto; and as we have the liberty of our respective apprehensions, so neither the one nor the other proves any thing in the cause. Setting aside cases of desertion, great temptations, and trials, I hope, through the riches of the grace and tenderness of the love of the Father, the condition is otherwise than is apprehended by Mr Goodwin with the generality of the family of God. The reasons given by him of his thoughts to the contrary do not sway me from my hopes, or bias my former apprehensions in the least. His reasons are,—

[1] 1 John v. 7, 8, ii. 20, 27; 2 Cor. i. 21, 22, v. 5; Eph. i. 13, 14, iv. 30; Rom. viii. 16; 1 John iii. 14.

[2] "Vere fidelis uti pro tempore præsenti de fidei et conscientiæ suæ integritate certus esse potest, ita et de salute sua et de salutifera Dei erga ipsum benevolentia pro illo tempore certus esse potest et debet."—Act. Synod. p. 182, Dec. Sent. thes. vii.

First, "Because though the testimony of a man's heart and conscience touching his uprightness towards God, or the soundness of any thing that is saving in him, be comfortable and cheering, yet seldom are these properties built upon such foundations which are sufficient to warrant them, at least upon such whose sufficiency in that kind is duly apprehended: for the testimony of the conscience of a man touching any thing which is spiritually and excellently good is of no such value, unless it be first excellently enlightened with the knowledge, nature, properties, and condition, of that of which it testifieth; and, secondly, be in the actual contemplation, consideration, or remembrance, of what it knoweth in this kind. Now, very few believers in the world come up to this height and degree."

Ans. First, There is in this reason couched a supposition which, if true, would be far more effectual to shake the confidence and resolution of believers than the most serious consideration of the apostasies of all professors that ever fell from the glory of their profession from the beginning of the world; and that is, that there is no other pregnant foundation of assurance but the testimony of a man's own heart and conscience touching his uprightness towards God, and therefore, before any can attain that assurance upon abiding foundations, they must be excellently enlightened in the nature, properties, and condition, of that which their consciences testify unto as true faith and uprightness of heart, and be clear in the disputes and questions about them, being in the actual contemplation of them when they give their testimony. I no way doubt but many thousands of believers, whose apprehensions of the nature, properties, and conditions of things, as they are in themselves, are low, weak, and confused,[1] yet, having received the Spirit of adoption, bearing witness with their spirits that they are the children of God, and having the testimony in themselves,[2] have been taken up into as high a degree of comforting and cheering assurance, and that upon the most infallible foundation imaginable (for "the Spirit beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth," 1 John v. 6), as ever the most seraphically illuminated person in the world attained unto. Yea, in the very graces themselves of faith and uprightness of heart, there is such a seal and stamp, impressing the image of God upon the soul, as, without any reflex act or actual contemplation of those graces themselves, have an influence into the establishment of the souls of men in whom they are unto a quiet, comfortable, assured repose of themselves upon the love and faithfulness of God. Neither is the spiritual confidence of the saints shaken, much less cast to the ground, by their conflicting with fears, scruples, and doubtful apprehensions, seeing in all these conflicts they have the pledge of the faithfulness

[1] 1 Cor. i. 26; James ii. 5. [2] Rom. viii. 16; 1 John v. 10.

of God that they shall be more than conquerors.[1] Though they are exercised by them, they are not dejected with them, nor deprived of that comforting assurance and joy which they have in believing. But yet suppose that this be the condition practically of many saints of God, and that they never attain to the state of the primitive Christians, to whose joy and consolation in believing the Holy Ghost so plentifully witnesseth, 1 Pet. i. 8, nor do live up to that full rate of plenty which their Father hath provided for them in his family, and sworn that he is abundantly willing they should enjoy and make use of, Heb. vi. 17, 18, what will hence follow, as to the business in hand, I profess I know not. Must that little evidence which they have of their acceptance with God be therefore necessarily built upon such bottoms, or rather tops, as are visible to them in hypocrites, so that upon their apostasy they must needs not only try and examine themselves, but conclude, to their disadvantage and disconsolation, that they have no true faith? "Credat Apella."

Secondly, The comfortableness, he tells us, of the testimony of a man's conscience concerning his uprightness with God "depends mainly and principally upon his uniform and regular walking with God. Now this being, by the neglects of the saints, often interrupted with many stains of unworthiness, the testimony itself must needs be often suspended. Now, true believers finding themselves outgone in ways of obedience by them that impenitently apostatize, if from hence they must conclude them hypocrites, they have no evidence left for the soundness of their own faith, which their consciences bear testimony unto, upon the fruitfulness of it, which is inferior by many degrees to that of them who yet finally fall away." This is the substance of one long section, pp. 109, 110. But,—

First, Here is the same supposal included as formerly, that the only evidence of a true faith and acceptance with God is the testimony of a man's conscience concerning his regular and upright walking with God; for an obstruction in this being supposed, his comfort and consolation is thought to vanish. But that the Scripture builds up our assurance on other foundations is evident, and the saints acknowledge it, as hath been before delivered. Nor,—

Secondly, Doth the testimony of a man's own conscience, as it hath an influence into his consolation, depend solely (nor doth Mr Goodwin affirm it so to do) on *the constant regularity* of his walking with God. It will also witness what former experience it hath had of God, calling to mind its "songs in the night," all the tokens and pledges of its Father's love, all the gracious visits of the holy and blessed Spirit of grace, all the embracements of Christ, all that intimacy and communion it hath formerly been admitted unto, the

[1] Matt. vii. 25, xvi. 18; Ps. lxxvii. 10; 1 Cor. i. 9; 1 Thess. v. 23, 24; 1 Cor. x. 13; Rom. viii. 37.

healing and recovery it hath had of wounds and from backslidings, with all the spiritual intercourse it ever had with God, to confirm and strengthen itself in the beginning of its confidence to the end.[1] And,—

Thirdly, In the testimony that it doth give, from *its walking with God, and the fruits of righteousness*, it is very far and remote from giving it only, or chiefly, or indeed at all, from those ways, works, and fruits, which are exposed to the eyes of men, and which in others they who have that testimony may behold. It resolves itself herein into the frame, principles, and life of the hidden man of the heart, which lies open and naked to the eyes of God, but is lodged in depths not to be fathomed by any of the sons of men.[2] There is no comparison to be instituted between the obedience and fruits of righteousness in others, whereby a believer makes a judgment of them, and that in himself from whence the testimony mentioned doth flow; that of other men being their visibly practical conversation, *his* being the hidden, habitual frame of his heart and spirit in his ways and actings: so that though, through the falling of them, he should be occasioned to question his own faith as to trial and examination, yet nothing can thence arise sufficient to enforce him to let go even that part of his comfort which flows from the weakest witness and one of the lowest voices of all his store. He eyes others without doors, but himself within.

Fourthly, Whereas 1 John iii. 7, "Little children, let no man deceive you, he that doeth righteousness is righteous," is produced, and two things argued from thence,—first, that the caveat, "Be not deceived," plainly intimates that true believers may very possibly be deceived in the estimate of a righteous man; and, secondly, that this is spoken of a man judging himself; and that, emphatically and exclusively, he and he only, is to be judged a righteous man.

Ans. First, I say, that though I grant the first, that we may very easily be, and often are, deceived in our estimate of righteous persons, yet I do not conceive the inference to be enforced from that expression, "Let no man deceive you," the Holy Ghost using it frequently, or what is equivalent thereunto, not so much to caution men in a dubious thing, wherein possibly they may be mistaken, as in a way of detestation, scorn, and rejection of what is opposite to that which he is urging upon his saints, which he presseth as a thing of the greatest evidence and clearness; as 1 Cor. vi. 9, xv. 33; Gal. vi. 7. Neither is any thing more intended in this expression of the apostle than in that of 1 Cor. vi. 9, "Be not deceived: the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God." So here, no person not giving himself up to the pursuit of righteousness in the general drift and scope of his life

[1] Job xxxv. 10; Ps. lxxvii. 5–9; Isa. xl. 28–31; Cant. iii. 1, 2, v. 4, 5; Ps. xlii. 6–11; Hos. ii. 7, xiv. 2, 8; Heb. iii. 14.

[2] Isa. xxxviii. 3; Ps. cxxxix. 23, 24; Rev. iii. 1; 1 Pet. iii. 4; 2 Cor. i. 12.

(cases extraordinary and particular acts being always in such rules excepted) is, or is to be, accounted a righteous man.

Secondly, Also it may be granted (though the intendment of the place leads us another way) that this is so far a rule of self-judging, that he whose frame and disposition suits it not, or is opposite unto it, cannot keep up the power or vigour of any other comfortable evidence of his state and condition; but that it should be so far extended as to make the only solid and pregnant foundation that any man hath of assurance and consolation to rise and flow from the testimony of his own conscience concerning his own regular walking in ways of righteousness (seeing persons that "walk in darkness and have no light" are called to "stay themselves on God," Isa. l. 10, and when both "heart and flesh faileth," yet "God is the strength of the heart," Ps. lxxiii. 26), is no way clear in itself, and is not by Mr Goodwin afforded the least contribution of assistance for its confirmation.

To return, then, from this digression: A temptation and an offence we acknowledge to be given to the saints by the apostasy of professors; yet not such but [that] as the Lord hath in Scripture made gracious provision against their suffering by it or under it, so it leaves them not without sufficient testimony of their own acceptance with God, and sincerity in walking with him. This, then, was the state of old; thus it is in the days wherein we live.

As the *practice* and ways of some, so the *principles* and teachings of others, have an eminent tendency unto offence and scandal. Indeed, ever since the Reformation, there have been some endeavours against this truth to corrode it and corrupt it. The first serious attempt for the *total intercision* of the faith of true believers, though not a *final excision* of the faith of elect believers, was made by one in the other university, who, being a man of a debauched and vicious conversation (no small part of the growing evils of the days wherein he lived), did yet cry out against the doctrines of others as tending to looseness and profaneness, upon whose breasts and teachings was written "Holiness to the LORD" all their days.[1] Afterward, Arminius and his Quinquarticulan followers[2] taking up the matter, though they laboured with all their might to answer sundry of the arguments whereby the truth of this doctrine is demonstrated, yet for a season were very faint and dubious in their own assertions, not daring to break in at once upon so great a treasure of the church of God;[3] and therefore in their Synodalia they are forced to apologize

[1] Owen seems to allude to the case of William Barrett, fellow of Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge. He denied the perseverance of the saints, and assailed Calvin, Beza, and other reformers, with bitter invectives. He was expelled from the university in 1595.—ED.

[2] Armin. Antiperk. Rem. Coll. Hag. art. 5.

[3] "Nos cum mentem nostram super hoc argumento categoricè et dogmaticè in alteram partem definivimus, nullo jure levitatis insimulari posse, propterea quod novem ab hinc annis, eam non ita disertè et rotundè enunciaverimus, sed solummodo disquirentium adhuc in morem professi simus."—Dec. Sent. Rem. circa 5 art.

for their hesitation nine years before, in their conference at the Hague. But now of late, since the glorious light of Socinianism hath broken forth from the pit, men by their new succours are grown bold to defy this great truth of the gospel and grace of the covenant, as an abomination for ever to be abhorred.[1]

> "Audax omnia perpeti
> Gens humana, ruit per vetitum nefas."
> Hor., Od. i. 3, 25.

In particular, the late studious endeavours of a learned man, in his treatise entitled "Redemption Redeemed," for to despoil the spouse of Christ of this most glorious pearl, wherewith her beloved hath adorned her, calls for a particular consideration: and this (discharging a regard unto any other motives) upon chiefly this account, that he hath with great pains and travail gathered together whatever hath been formerly given out and dispersed by the most considerable adversaries of this truth (especially not omitting any thing of moment in the synodical defence of the fifth article, with an exact translation of the dramatical prosopopœias, with whatsoever looks towards his design in hand from their fourth attempt about the manner of conversion), giving it anew not only an elegant dress and varnish of rhetorical expressions, but moreover re-enforcing the declining cause of his Pelagian friends with not-to-be-despised supplies of appearing reasons and hidden sophistry, Col. ii. 4. So that though I shall handle this doctrine in my own method (with the reason whereof I shall instantly acquaint the reader), and not follow that author κατὰ πόδας, yet handling not only the main of the doctrine itself, but all the concernments and consequences of it in the several branches of the method intended, I hope not to leave any thing considerable in that whole treatise, as to the truth in hand, undiscussed, no argument unvindicated, no objection unanswered, no consequence unweighed, with a special eye to the comparison instituted between the doctrines in contest, as to their direct and causal influence into the obedience and consolation of the saints.

That we may know, then, what we speak and whereof we do affirm, I shall briefly state the doctrine under consideration, that the difference about it may appear. Indeed, it seems strange to me, among other things, that he of whom mention was lastly made, who hath liberally dispended so great a treasure of pains, reading, and eloquence, for the subverting of the truth whose explanation and defence we have undertaken, did not yet once attempt fairly to fix the state of the difference about it, but, in a very tumultuary manner,[2] fell in with prejudices, swelling over all bounds and limits of ordinary reasoning, rhetorical amplifications, upon a doctrine not attempted to be brought forth and explained, that it might be weighed in the

[1] Socin. Prælect. Theol. cap. vi. art. 7, etc. [2] Chap. ix.

balance, as in itself it is. Whereas there may be many reasons of such a proceeding, it may well be questioned whether any of them be candid and commendable. Certainly the advantages thence taken for the improving of many sophistical reasons and pretended arguments are obvious to every one that shall but peruse his ensuing discourse.

Although the substance of this doctrine hath been by sundry delivered, yet, lest the terms wherein it is usually done may seem to be somewhat too general, and some advantages of the truth, which in itself it hath, to have been omitted, I shall briefly state the whole matter under those terms wherein it is usually received.

The title of it is, "The Perseverance of Saints." A short discovery of whom we mean by "saints," the subject whereof we speak, and what by "perseverance," which is affirmed of them, will state the whole for the judgment of the reader. God only is essentially holy, and on that account the only Holy One. In his holiness, as in his being and all his glorious attributes, there is an actual permanency or sameness, Heb. i. 10–12. Nothing in him is subject to the least shadow of change,—not his truth, not his faithfulness, not his holiness. All principles, causes, and reasons of alteration stand at no less infinite distance from him than not-being. His properties are the same with himself, and are spoken of one another, as well as of his nature. His eternal power is mentioned by the apostle, Rom. i. 20. So is his holiness eternal, immutable. Of this we may have use afterward; for the present I treat not of it. The holiness of all creatures is *accidental* and *created*. To some it is *innate* or original; as to the angels, the first man, our Saviour Christ as to his human nature, of whom we treat not. Adam had original holiness, and lost it; so had many angels, who kept not their first habitation. It is hence argued by Mr Goodwin, that spiritual gifts of God being bestowed may be taken away, notwithstanding the seeming contrary engagement of Rom. xi. 29. From what proportion or analogy this argument doth flow is not intimated. The grace Adam was endowed with was intrusted with himself and in his own keeping, in a covenant of works; that of the saints since the fall is purchased for them, laid up in their Head, and dispensed in a covenant of grace, whose eminent distinction from the former consists in the permanency and abidingness of the fruits of it. But of this afterward. To others it is *adventitious* and added, as to all that have contracted any qualities contrary to that original holiness wherewith at first they were endued; as have done all the sons of men, "who have sinned and come short of the glory of God."[1] Now,

[1] Isa. vi. 3; Josh. xxiv. 19; Rev. xv. 4; Exod. iii. 14; Deut. xxxii. 4; Isa. xl. 28, xli. 4, xliii. 10, xliv. 6, xlviii. 12; Rev. i. 4, 17; Mal. iii. 6; James i. 17; 1 Sam. xv. 29; Gen. i. 26; Matt. xix. 17; Eccles. vii. 29; Heb. vii. 25. Ezek. xxxvi. 26, 27; Isa iv. 3, 4; Rom. vi. 4-6; Eph. iv. 22-24.

the holiness of these is either complete, as it is with the spirits of just men made perfect; or inchoate and begun only, as with the residue of sanctified ones in this life. The certain perseverance of the former in their present condition being not directly opposed by any, though the foundation of it be attempted by some, we have no need as yet to engage in the defence of it. These latter are said to be sanctified or holy two ways, upon the twofold account of the use of the word in the Scripture; for,—

First, some persons, as well as things, are said to be holy, especially in the Old Testament and in the Epistle to the Hebrews, almost constantly using the terms of sanctifying and sanctified in a legal or temple signification, in reference unto their being *separated* from the residue of men with relation to God and his worship, or being consecrated and dedicated peculiarly to the performance of any part of his will, or distinct enjoyment of any portion of his mercy.[1] Thus the ark was said to be holy, and the altar holy; the temple was holy, and all the utensils of it, with the vestments of its officers. So the whole people of the Jews were said to be holy. The particular respects of covenant, worship, separation, law, mercy, and the like, upon which this denomination of holiness and saintship was given unto them and did depend, are known to all. Yea, persons inherently unclean, and personally notoriously wicked, in respect of their designment to some outward work, which by them God will bring about, are said to be sanctified. Distinguishing gifts, with designation to some distinct employment, are a bottom for this appellation, though their gifts may be recalled, and the employment taken from them, Isa. xiii. 3. We confess perseverance not to be a proper and inseparable adjunct of this subject, nor to belong unto such persons, as such; though they may have a right to it, it is upon another account. Yet, in the pursuit of this business, it will appear that many of our adversaries' arguments smite these men only, and prove that such as they may be totally rejected of God; which none ever denied.

Again; the word is used in an *evangelical* sense, for inward purity and *real* holiness: whence some are said to be holy, and that also two ways; for either they are so really and in the truth of the thing itself, or in estimation only, and that either of themselves or others. That many have accounted themselves to be holy, and been pure in their own eyes, who yet were never washed from their iniquity, and have thereupon cried peace to themselves, I suppose needs no proving. It is the case of thousands in the world at this day. They think themselves holy, they profess themselves holy; and our adversaries prove (none gainsaying) that such as these may backslide from what they have and what they seem to have, and so perish under

[1] Exod. xxviii. 36, 38; Lev. v. 15; Ezek. xxii. 8; Heb. ii. 11, x. 10; John xvii. 19.

the sin of apostasy.[1] Again, some are said to be holy upon the score of their being so in the esteem of others; which was and is the condition of many false hypocrites in the churches of Christ, both primitive and modern;—like them who are said to "believe in Christ," upon the account of the profession they made so to do, yet he would not "trust himself with them, because he knew what was in them." Such were Judas, Simon Magus, and sundry others, of whom these things are spoken, which they professed of themselves, and were bound to answer, and which others esteemed to be in them. These some labour with all their strength to make true believers, that so they may cast the stumbling-block of their apostasy in the way of the saints of God closing with the truth we have in hand.[2] But for such as these we are no advocates; let them go to their "own place," according to the tenor of the arguments levied against them from Heb. vi. 4–6, 2 Pet. ii. 1, etc., and other places.

Moreover, of those who are said to believe, and to be holy really and in the truth of the thing itself, there are two sorts: First, such as, having received sundry common gifts and graces of the Spirit,—as illumination of the mind, change of affections, and thence amendment of life, with sorrow of the world, legal repentance, temporary faith, and the like, which are all true and real in their kind,—do thereby become vessels in the great house of God, being changed as to their use, though not in their nature, continuing stone and wood still, though hewed and turned to the serviceableness of vessels; and on that account they are frequently termed saints and believers. On such as these there is a lower (and in some a subordinate) work of the Spirit, effectually producing in and on all the faculties of their souls somewhat that is true, good, and useful in itself, answering in some likeness and suitableness of operation unto the great work of regeneration, which faileth not. There is in them light, love, joy, faith, zeal, obedience, etc., all true in their kinds; which make many of them in whom they are do worthily in their generation: howbeit they attain not to the faith of God's elect, neither doth Christ live in them, nor is the life which they lead by the faith of the Son of God, as shall hereafter be fully declared.[3] If ye now cashier these from the roll of those saints and believers about whom we contend, seeing that they are nowhere said to be united to Christ, quickened and justified, partakers of the first resurrection, accepted of God, etc., ye do almost put an issue to the whole controversy, and at once overturn

[1] Luke i. 15; Rom. vi. 19, 22; 2 Cor. vii. 1; Eph. i. 4, iv. 24; 1 Thess. iii. 13, iv. 7; Heb. xii. 14, κατ' ἀλήθειαν, κατὰ δίξαν; Prov. xxx. 12; Isa. lxv. 5; John vii. 48, 49, ix. 40, 41; 1 Thess. v. 3; Matt. xxv. 29; 2 Pet ii. 20, 21; John vi. 66.

[2] 2 Pet. ii. 1; Act. Synod. Dec. Sent., art. 5, pp 266, 267, etc.

[3] Heb. vi. 4; 1 Sam. x. 10; 2 Pet. ii. 20; 1 Kings xxi. 27; 2 Cor. vii. 10; Matt. xxvii. 3, 4, xiii. 20, 21; Mark vi. 20; 2 Kings x. 16; Hosea vi. 4; 2 Tim. ii. 20; John vi. 34; Acts xxvi. 28; Matt. vii. 26, 27; Rev. iii. 1; Mark iv. 16, 17.

the strongest forts of the opposers of this truth. Some men are truly ready to think that *they* never had experience of the nature of true faith or holiness, who can suppose it to consist in such like common gifts and graces as are ascribed to this sort of men. Yet, as was said before, if these may not pass for saints, if our adversaries cannot prove these to be true believers, in the strictest notion and sense of that term or expression, *actum est*,—the very subject about which they contend is taken away; such as these alone are concerned in the arguments from Heb. vi. 4–6; 2 Pet. ii. 1, etc. Yea, all the testimonies which they produce for the supportment of their cause from antiquity flow from hence, that their witnesses thought good to allow persons baptized and professing the gospel the name of believers, and of being regenerate (that is, as to the participation of the outward symbol thereof); whom yet they expressly distinguish from them whose faith was the fruit of their eternal election, which they constantly maintained should never fail.

Of such as these Mr Goodwin tells us, cap. ix. sect. 7, pp. 107, 108, "That if there be any persons under heaven who may, upon sufficient grounds, and justifiable by the word of God, be judged true believers, many of the apostates we speak of were to be judged such. All the visible lineaments of a true faith were in their faces, as far as the eye of man is able to pierce; they lived godly, righteously, and soberly in this present world. Doth any true believer act zealously for his God?—so did they. Is any true believer fruitful in good works?—they were such. Yea, there is found in those we now speak of, not only such things as upon the sight and knowledge whereof in men we ought to judge them true believers,[1] but even such things, farther, which we ought to reverence and honour, as lovely and majestic characters of God and holiness. Therefore, it is but too importune a pretence in men to deny them to have been true believers."

If the proof of the first confident assertion, concerning the grounds of judging such as afterward have apostatized to be true believers, were called into question, I suppose it would prove one instance how much easier it is confidently to *affirm* any thing than soundly to *confirm* it. And perhaps it will be found to appear, that in the most, if not all, of those glorious apostates of whom he speaks, if they were thoroughly traced and strictly eyed, even in those things which are exposed to the view of men, for any season or continuance, such warpings and flaws might be discovered, in positives or negatives, as are incompatible with truth or grace.[2] But if this be granted, that they have "all the visible lineaments of a true faith in their faces, as far as the eye of man is able to judge, and therefore men were

[1] "Adde hos de quibus hic agimus, non vulgares et plebeios, sed antesignanos et eximios ac eminentes fuisse."—Rem. Act. Synod, p. 267.

[2] Ps. lxxviii. 34–36; Job xxvii. 9, 10; 2 Kings x. 29; Ezek. xxxiii. 31; Tit. i. 16.

bound to esteem them for true believers," doth it therefore follow that they were such indeed? This at once instates all secret hypocrites in the ancient and present churches of Christ into a condition of sanctification and justification; which the Lord knows they were and are remote from. Shall the esteem of men translate them from death to life, and really alter the state wherein they are? Whatever honour, then, and esteem we may give to the characters of holiness and faith enstamped, or rather painted on them,—as it is meet for us to judge well of all who, professing the Lord Christ, walk in our view in any measure suitable to that profession, and with Jonadab to honour Jehu in his fits and hasty passions of zeal,—yet this, alas! is no evidence unto them, nor discovery of the thing itself, that they are in a state of faith and holiness. To say that we may not be bound to judge any to be believers and godly, unless they are so indeed and in the thing itself, is either to exalt poor worms into the throne of God, and to make them "searchers of the hearts and triers of the reins" of others, who are so often in the dark as to themselves, and never in this life sufficiently acquainted with their own inward chambers; or else at once to cut off and destroy all communion of saints, by rendering it impossible for us to attain satisfaction who are so indeed, so far as to walk with them upon that account in "love without dissimulation," Rom. xii. 9. Doubtless the disciples of Christ were bound to receive them for believers of whom it is said that they did believe, because of their profession so to do, and that with some hazard and danger, though He who "knew what was in man" would not trust himself with them, because the root of the matter was not in them, John ii. 23, 24.

I suppose I shall not need to put myself to the labour to prove or evince the ground of our charitable procedure, in our thoughts of men professing the ways of God, though their hearts are not upright with him. But says Mr Goodwin, "To say that whilst they stood men were indeed bound to judge them believers, but by their declining they discover themselves not to have been the men, is but to beg the question, and that upon very ill terms to obtain it."

Ans. For my part, I find not in this answer to that objection ("But they had the lineaments of true believers, and therefore we were bound to judge them so"), that this did not at all prove them to be so, any begging of the question, but rather a fair answer given to their importune request, that the "appearance of the face, as far as the eyes of men can pierce," 1 Sam. xvi. 7, must needs conclude them in the eyes of God to answer that appearance in the inward and hidden man of the heart.

But Mr Goodwin farther pursues his design in hand from the words of our Saviour, Matt. vii. 20, "By their fruits ye shall know them." "If," saith he, "this rule be authentical, we do not only

stand bound by the law of charity, but by the law of righteous or strict judgment itself, to judge the persons we speak of true believers, whilst they adorn the gospel with such fruits of righteousness as were mentioned; for our Saviour doth not say, 'By their fruits ye shall have grounds to conceive or conjecture them such or such, or to judge them in charity such or such,' but, 'Ye shall know them.' Now, what a man knows he is not bound to conjecture, or to judge in a way of charity to be that which he knoweth it to be, but positively to judge and conclude of it accordingly. If, then, it be possible for men, by any such fruits, works, or expressions, to know true believers, the persons we speak of may be known to have been such."

Ans. Though the words of our Saviour principally lie on the other side of the way, giving a rule for a condemnatory judgment of men whose evil fruits declare the root to be no better,—wherein we cannot well be deceived, "the works of the flesh being manifest," Gal. v. 19, and he that worketh wickedness openly, and brings forth the effects of sin visibly in a course, as a tree doth its fruit, Rom. vi. 16, may safely be concluded, whatsoever pretence in words he makes, to be a false, corrupt hypocrite,—yet, by the way of analogy and proportion, it is a rule also whereby our Saviour will have us make a judgment of those professors and teachers with whom we have to do, as to our reception and approbation of them. He bids his disciples taste and try the fruit that such persons bear, and according to that (not any specious pretences they make, or innocent appearances which for a season they show themselves in) let their estimation of them be. Yea, but says Mr Goodwin, "We do not only stand bound by the law of charity, but by the law of a righteous and strict judgment itself, to judge such persons believers." This distinction between the law of charity and the law of a righteous judgment I understand not. Though charity be the principle exerted eminently in such dijudications of men, yet doubtless it proceeds by the rules of righteous judgment. When we speak of the judgment of charity, we intend not a loose conjecture, much less a judgment contradistinct from that which is righteous, but a righteous and strict judgment, according to the exactest rules whatsoever that we have to judge by, free from evil surmises, and such like vices of the mind as are opposed to the grace of love. By saying it is of charity, we are not absolved from the most exact procedure, according to the rules of judging given unto us, but only bound up from indulging to any envy, malice, or such like works of the flesh, which are opposite to charity in the subject wherein it is. Charity in this assertion denotes only a gracious qualification in the subject, and not any condescension from the rule; and therefore I something wonder that Mr Goodwin should make a judgment of charity (as afterward) a

mere conjecture, and allow beyond it a righteous and strict judgment, which amounts to knowledge.

It is true, our Saviour tells us that "by their fruits we shall know them;" but what knowledge is it that he intendeth? Is it a *certain knowledge* by demonstration of it? or an *infallible assurance* by revelation? I am confident Mr Goodwin will not say it is either of these, but only such a persuasion as is the result of our thoughts concerning them, upon the profession they make and the works they do; upon which we may (according to the mind of Christ, who bare with them whom he knew to be no believers, having taken on them the profession of the faith) know how to demean ourselves towards them. So far we may know them by their fruits and judge of them; other knowledge our Saviour intendeth not, nor I believe does Mr Goodwin pretend unto. Now, notwithstanding all this, even on this account and by this rule, it is very possible, yea very easy, and practically proved true in all places and at all times, that we may judge, yea, so far know men to be or not to be seducers by their fruits, as to be able to order aright our demeanour towards them, according to the will of Christ, and yet be mistaken (though not in the performance of our duty in walking regularly according to the lines drawn out for our paths) in the persons concerning whom our judgment is; the knowledge of them being neither by demonstration nor from revelation, such as "cui non potest subesse falsum," we may be deceived.

The saints, then, or believers (of whom alone our discourse is), may be briefly delineated by these few considerable concernments of their saintship:—

1. That whereas "by nature they are children of wrath as well as others," and "dead in trespasses and sins," that faith and holiness which they are in due time invested withal, whereby they are made believers and saints, and distinguished from all others whatever, is an effect and fruit of, and flows from, God's eternal purpose concerning their salvation or election; their faith being, as to the manner of its bestowing, peculiarly of the operation of God, and as to its distinction from every other gift that upon any account whatever is so called, in respect of its fountain, termed "The faith of God's elect."[1]

2. For the manner of their obtaining of this precious faith, it is by God's giving to them that Holy Spirit of his whereby he raised Jesus from the dead, to raise them from their death in sin, to quicken them unto newness of life, enduing them with a new life, with a spiritual, gracious, supernatural habit, spreading itself upon their whole souls, making them new creatures throughout (in respect of parts), investing them with an abiding principle, being a natural,

[1] Rom. viii. 28, 29; Acts xiii. 48; Eph. i. 4; 1 Pet. i. 2–5; Tit. i. 1.

genuine fountain of all those spiritual acts, works, and duties, which he is pleased to work in them and by them of his own good pleasure.[1]

3. That the holy and blessed Spirit, which effectually and powerfully works this change in them, is bestowed upon them as a fruit of the purchase and intercession of Jesus Christ, to dwell in them and abide with them for ever: upon the account of which inhabitation of the Spirit of Christ in them they have union with him; that is, one and the same Spirit dwelling in him the head and them the members.[2]

4. By all which, as to their actual state and condition, they are really changed from death to life,[3] from darkness to light,[4] from universal, habitual uncleanness to holiness,[5] from a state of enmity, stubbornness, rebellion, etc., into a state of love, obedience, delight, etc.;[6] and as to their relative condition, whereas they were children of wrath, under the curse and condemning power of the law, they are, upon the score of Him who was made a curse for them, and is made righteousness to them, accepted, justified, adopted, and admitted into that family of heaven and earth which is called after the name of God.[7]

These alone are they of whom we treat, of whose state and condition perseverance is an inseparable adjunct. Wherein and in what particulars they are differenced from and advanced above the most glorious professors whatever, who are liable and obnoxious to an utter and everlasting separation from God, shall be afterward at large insisted upon; and though Mr Goodwin hath thought good to affirm that that description which we have, Heb. vi. 4–6, of such as ([it] is supposed) may be apostates, is one of the highest and most eminent that is made of believers in the whole Scripture, I shall not doubt but to make it evident that the excellency of all the expressions there used, being extracted and laid together, doth yet come short of the meanest and lowest thing that is spoken of these concerning whom we treat; as shall be manifest when, through God's assistance, we arrive unto that part of this contest.

That the other term, to wit, "perseverance," may be more briefly explicated, I shall take the shortest path. For perseverance in general, he came near the nature of it who said it was "In ratione bene consideratâ stabilis ac perpetua permansio."[8] The words and terms whereby it is expressed in Scripture will afterwards fall in to be

[1] 2 Pet. i. 1; Rom. viii. 11; Eph. i. 19, 20, ii. 1, 5, 6, 8, 10; Matt. vii. 17, xii. 33; Gal. ii. 20; 1 John v. 12; 2 Cor. v. 17; 1 Thess. v. 23; Gal. v. 22, 23; 1 John iii. 9; Eph. ii. 10; 1 Pet. i. 22, 23; Phil. ii. 13.

[2] John xiv. 16, 26, xv. 26, xvi. 7–11; Rom. viii. 10, 11; 1 Cor. vi. 19; Rom. v. 5; 1 John iv. 4, 13; 2 Tim. i. 14; 1 Cor. vi. 17, xii. 12, 13; Eph. iv. 4.

[3] 1 John iii. 14; Eph. ii. 1; Col. ii. 13; Rom. vi. 11, 13, viii. 2, 10.

[4] Acts xxvi. 18; Eph. v. 8; 1 Thess. v. 4; Col. i. 13; 1 Pet. ii. 9.

[5] Ezek. xxxvi. 25; Zech. xiii. 1; Isa. iv. 3, 4; Eph. v. 25–27; 1 Cor. vi. 11; Tit. iii. 5; Heb. x. 22.

[6] Rom. vi. 11; Eph. ii. 12–16; Col. i. 21; Heb. xii. 22–24.

[7] Eph. ii. 3; Gal. iii. 13, iv. 4–7; Rom. viii. 1; 2 Cor. v. 21; Col. ii. 10; Rom. v. 1, viii. 32, 33; 1 John iii. 1, 2; Eph. iii. 15.

[8] Cic. Inv., lib. ii. 54.

considered. The Holy Ghost restrains not himself to any one expression in spiritual things of so great importance, but using that variety which may be suited to the instruction, supportment, and consolation of believers,[1] this grace (as is that of faith itself in an eminent manner) is by him variously expressed. To walk in the name of the Lord for ever; to walk with Christ as we have received him; to be confirmed or strengthened in the faith as we have been taught; to keep the ways of God's commandments to the end; to run steadfastly the race set before us; to rule with God; to be faithful with the saints; to be faithful to the death; to be sound and steadfast in the precepts of God; to abide or continue firm with Christ, in Christ, in the Lord, in the word of Christ, in the doctrine of Christ, in the faith, in the love and favour of God, in what we have learned and received from the beginning; to endure; to persist in the truth; to be rooted in Christ; to retain or keep faith and a good conscience; to hold fast our confidence and faith to the end; to follow God fully; to keep the word of Christ's patience; to be built upon and in Christ; to keep ourselves that the wicked one touch us not; not to commit sin; to be kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation; to stand fast as mount Zion, that can never be removed; to stand by faith; to stand fast in the faith; to stand fast in the Lord; to have the good work begun, perfected; to hold our profession that none take our crown;[2]—these, I say, and the like, are some of those expressions whereby the Holy Ghost holds forth that doctrine which we have in hand, which is usually called "The perseverance of saints," regarding principally their abiding with God, through Christ, in faith and obedience; which yet is but one part of this truth.

The reasons and causes investing this proposition, that saints, such as we have described, shall so persevere, with a necessity of consequence, and on which the truth of it doth depend, both negatively considered and positively; with the limitation of perseverance, what it directly asserts, what not; with what failing, backsliding, and declensions, on the one hand and other, it is consistent, and what is destructive of the nature and being of it; the difference of it, as to *being* and *apprehension*, in respect to the subject in whom it is; with the way and manner whereby the causes of this perseverance have their operation on and effect in them that persevere, not in the least prejudicing their liberty, but establishing them in their voluntary

[1] Rom. xv. 4.

[2] 2 Sam. vii. 14, 15; Ps. i. 3, xxiii. 6, xxxvii. 24, lv. 22, lxxxix. 31–33. cxxv. 1–3, cxxviii. 5; Isa. xlvi. 4, liv. 10; Jer. xxxi. 3, xxxii. 39, 40; Zech. x. 12; Matt. vii. 24, 25, xii. 20, xvi. 18, xxiv. 24; Luke viii. 8, xxii. 32; John vi. 35, 39, 56, 57, [illegible]ii. 12, x. 27–29, xiv. 16, 17, xvii. 20–22; Rom. viii. 1, 16, 17, 28–37; 1 Cor. i. 8, 9, x. 13, xv. 58; 1 John v. 18, iii. 9; 1 Pet. i. 5; Rom. xi. 20; 1 Cor. xvi. 13; Phil iv 1, i. 6; Eph. i. 13, 14, iv. 30; Gal. ii. 20; Phil. i. 6; 1 Thess. v. 24; 2 Tim. ii. 12; 1 Pet. i. 2–5; 1 John ii. 19, 27, etc.

obedience,—will afterward be fully cleared. And hereon depends much of the life and vigour of the doctrine we have in hand, it being oftener in the Scripture held forth in its fountains, and springs, and causes, than in the thing itself, as will upon examination appear.

As to what is on the other side affirmed, that believers may *fall totally and finally away*, something may be added to clear up what is intended thereby, and to inquire how it may come to pass. We do suppose (which the Scripture abundantly testifieth) that such believers have the Holy Spirit dwelling in them;[1] and, by his implanting, a new holy habit of grace.[2] The inquiry then is, how believers may come utterly to lose this Holy Spirit, and to be made naked of the habit of grace or new nature bestowed on them. That, and that only, whereunto this effect is ascribed is *sin*. Now, there are two ways whereby sin may be supposed to produce such effects in reference to the souls of believers:—1. *Efficiently*, by a reaction in the same subject, as frequent acts of vice will debilitate and overthrow an acquired habit whereunto it is opposite. 2. *Meritoriously*, by provoking the Lord to take them away in a way of punishment; for of all punishment sin is the morally procuring cause. Let us a little consider which of these ways it may probably be supposed that sin expels the Spirit and habit of grace from the souls of believers.

First, [As] for the Spirit of grace which dwells in them, it cannot with the least colour of reason be supposed that sin should have a *natural efficient reaction* against the Spirit, which is a voluntary indweller in the hearts of his: he is indeed grieved and provoked by it,[3] but that is in a *moral way*, in respect of its demerit; but that it should have a natural efficiency by the way of opposition against it, as intemperance against the mediocrity which it opposeth, is a madness to imagine.

The habit of grace wherewith such believers are endued is infused, not acquired by a frequency of acts in themselves. The root is made good, and then the fruit, and the work of God. It is "a new creation," planted in them by "the exceeding greatness of his power," as "he wrought in Christ when he raised him from the dead;" which he also "strengthens with all might"[4] and all power to the end. Is it now supposed, or can it rationally be so, that vicious acts, acts of sin, should have in the soul a natural efficiency for the expelling of an infused habit, and that implanted upon the soul by the exceeding greatness of the power of God? That it should be done by any one or two acts is impossible. To suppose a man, in whom there is a

[1] Ezek. xxxvi. 27; Isa. lix. 21; Luke xi. 13; Ps. li. 11; Rom. viii. 9, 11, 15; 1 Cor. ii. 12; Gal. iv. 6; 2 Tim. i. 14; Rom. v. 5; Gal. v. 22; John xiv. 16, 17, xvi. 13; 1 Cor. iii. 16, vi. 19.

[2] Matt. xii. 33; 2 Cor. v. 17; 2 Pet. i. 4; Gal. v. 22, 23; Eph. iv. 23, 24.

[3] Eph. iv. 30; Heb. iii. 10, 11; Isa. lxiii. 10

[4] Col. ii. 12; 2 Cor. v. 17; Eph. i. 19, 20; Col. i. 11.

habit set on by so mighty an impression as the Scripture mentions, to act constantly contrary thereunto, is to think what we will, without troubling ourselves to consider how it may be brought about. Farther; whilst this principle, life, and habit of grace is thus consuming, doth their God and Father look on and suffer it to decay, and their spiritual man to pine away day by day, giving them no new supplies, nor increasing them with the increase of God?[1] Hath he no pity towards a dying child? or can he not help him? Doth he, of whom it is said that he is "faithful," and that he "will not suffer us to be tempted above what we are able, but will with the temptation make a way to escape," let loose such flood-gates of temptations upon them as he knows his grace will not be able to stand before, but will be consumed and expelled by it? What, also, shall we suppose are the thoughts of Jesus Christ towards a withering member, a dying brother, a perishing child, a wandering sheep?[2] Where are his zeal, and his tender mercies, and the sounding of his bowels? Are they restrained? Will he not lay hold of his strength, and stir up his righteousness, to save a poor sinking creature? Also, "He that is in us is greater than he that is in the world;" and will he suffer himself to be wrought out of his habitation, and not stir up his strength to keep possession of the dwelling-place which he had chosen? So that neither in the nature of the thing itself, nor in respect of him with whom we have to do, doth this seem possible. But,—

Secondly, Sin procureth, by the way of merit, the taking away of the Spirit and removal of the habit graciously bestowed. Believers deserve by sin that God should take his Spirit from them, and the grace that he hath bestowed on them: they do so indeed; it cannot be denied. But will the Lord deal so with them? Will he judge his house with such fire and vengeance?[3] Is that the way of a father with his children? Until he hath taken away his Spirit and grace, although they are rebellious children, yet they are his children still. And is this the way of a tender father, to cut the throats of his children when it is in his power to mend them? The casting of a wicked man into hell is not a punishment to be compared to this; the loss of God's presence is the worst of hell. How infinitely must they needs be more sensible of it who have once enjoyed it than those who were strangers to it from the womb! Certainly the Lord bears another testimony concerning his kindness to his sons and daughters than that we should entertain such dismal thoughts of him.[4] He chastises his children, indeed, but he doth not kill them; he corrects them with rods, but his kindness he takes

[1] Eph. i. 23; Col. ii. 19; Eph. iv. 16; 1 Thess. iii. 12; Phil. i. 6; 1 Cor. x. 13.
[2] Heb. ii. 17, 18, iv. 15, vii. 25; Isa. xl. 11, lxiii. 9; Ezek. xxxiv. 4, 12.
[3] Isa. xlviii. 9. [4] Isa. xlix. 15, 16, lxvi. 13; Jer. ii. 1–3; Hos. ii. 14, etc.

not from them. Notwithstanding of the attempt made by the Remonstrants, in their Synodalia, I may say that I have not as yet met with any tolerable extrication of these difficulties. More to this purpose will afterward be insisted on.

That which we intend when we mention "the perseverance of saints," is their continuance to the end in the condition of saintship whereunto they are called. Now, in the state of saintship, there are two things concurring:—1. That holiness which they receive from God; and, 2. That favour which they have with God, being justified freely by his grace, through the blood of Christ. And their continuance in this condition to the end of their lives, both as to their real holiness and gracious acceptance, is the perseverance whereof we must treat,—the one respecting their real estate, the other their relative; of which more particularly afterward.

And this is a brief delineation of the doctrine which, the Lord assisting, shall be explained, confirmed, and vindicated, in the ensuing discourse; which being first set forth as a mere skeleton, its symmetry and complexion, its beauty and comeliness, its strength and vigour, its excellency and usefulness, will, in the description of the several parts and branches of it, be more fully manifested.

Now, because Mr Goodwin, though he was not pleased to fix any orderly state of the question under debate,—a course he hath also thought good to take in handling those other heads of the doctrine of the gospel wherein he hath chosen to walk (for the main with the Arminians) in paths of difference from the reformed churches,—yet having scattered up and down his treatise what his conceptions are of the doctrine he doth oppose, as also what he asserts in the place and room thereof, and upon what principles, I shall briefly call what he hath so delivered, both on the one hand and on the other, to an account, to make the clearer way for the proof of the truth which indeed we own, and for the discovery of that which is brought forth to contest for acceptance with it upon the score of truth and usefulness.

First, then, for the doctrine of the saints' perseverance, how it stands stated in Mr Goodwin's thoughts, and what he would have other men apprehend thereof, may from sundry places in his book, especially chap. ix., be collected, and thus summarily presented. "It is," saith he, sect. 3, "a promising unto men, and that with height of assurance, under what looseness or vile practices soever, exemption and freedom from punishment." So sect. 4, "It is in vain to persuade or press men unto the use of such means in any kind which are in themselves displeasing to them, seeing they are ascertained and secured beforehand that they shall not fail of the end however, whether they use such means or no;—a luscious and fulsome conceit (sect. 5), intoxicating the flesh with a persuasion that

it hath goods laid up for the days of eternity; a notion comfortable, and betiding peace to the flesh (sect. 15), in administering unto it certain hope that it shall, however, escape the wrath and vengeance which is to come, yea, though it disporteth itself in all manner of looseness and licentiousness in the meantime. A presumption it is that men (sect. 18) may or shall enjoy the love of God, and salvation itself, under practice of all manner of sin and wickedness; representing God (sect. 20) as a God in whose sight he is good that doth evil; promising his love, favour, and acceptance, as well unto dogs returning to their vomit, or to swine wallowing in the mire after their washing" (that is, to apostates, which that believers shall not be is indeed the doctrine he opposeth), "as unto lambs and sheep. A doctrine this whereby it is possible for me certainly to know, that how loosely, how profanely, how debauchedly soever, I should behave myself, yet God will love me, as he doth the holiest and most righteous man under heaven."

With these and the like expressions doth Mr Goodwin adorn and gild over that doctrine which he hath chosen to oppose; with these garlands and flowers doth he surround the head of the sacrifice which he intends instantly to slay, that so it may fall an undeplored victim, if not seasonably rescued from the hands of this sacred officer. Neither through his whole treatise do I find it delivered in any other sense, or held out under any other notion to his reader. The course here he hath taken in this case, and the paths he walks in towards his adversaries, seems to be no other than that which was traced out by the bishops at Constance, when they caused devils to be painted upon the cap they put on the head of Huss before they cast him into the fire. I do something doubt (though I am not altogether ignorant how abominably the tenets and opinions of those who first opposed the Papacy are represented and given over to posterity, by them whose interest it was to have them thought such as they gave them out to be) whether ever any man that undertook to publish his conceptions to the world about any opinion or parcel of truth debated amongst professors of the gospel of Christ, did ever so dismember, disfigure, defile, wrest, and pervert, that which he opposed, as Mr Goodwin hath done the doctrine of perseverance, which he hath undertaken to destroy. Methinks a man should not be much delighted in casting filth and dung upon his adversary before he begin to grapple with him. In one word, this being the account he gives us of it, if he be able to name one author, ancient or modern, any one sober person of old or of late, that ever spent a penful of ink, or once opened his mouth in the defence of that perseverance of saints, or rather profane walking of dogs and swine, which he hath stated, not in the words and terms, but so much as to the matter or purpose here intimated by him, it shall be accepted as a just defensative

against the crime which we are enforced to charge in this particular, and which otherwise will not easily be warded. If this be the doctrine which, with so great an endeavour, and a contribution of so much pains and rhetoric, he seeks to oppose, I know not any that will think it worth while to interpose in this fierce contest between him and his man of straw. Neither can it with the least colour of truth be pretended that these are consequences which he urgeth the doctrine he opposeth withal, and not his apprehensions of the doctrine itself: for neither doth he in any place in his whole treatise hold it out in any other shape, but is uniform and constant to himself in expressing his notion of it; nor doth he, indeed, almost use any argument against it but those that suppose this to be the true state of the controversy which he hath proposed. But whether this indeed be the doctrine of the perseverance of saints which Mr Goodwin so importunately cries out against, upon a brief consideration of some of the particulars mentioned, will quickly appear.

First, then, doth this doctrine "promise, with height of assurance, that under what looseness or vile practices soever men do live, they shall have exemption from punishment?" Wherein, I pray?—in that it promiseth the saints of God, that through his grace they shall be preserved from such looseness and evil practices as would expose them to eternal punishment?[1] Doth it teach men that it is vain to use the means of mortification, because they shall certainly attain the end whether they use the means or no? Or may you not as well say that the doctrine you oppose is, that all men shall be saved whether they believe or no, with those other comfortable and cheering associate doctrines you mention? Or is this a regular emergency of that doctrine which teaches that there is no attaining the end but by the means, between which there is such a concatenation by divine appointment that they shall not be separated? Doth it "speak peace to the flesh, in assurance of a blessed immortality, though it disport itself in all folly in the meantime?" Do the teachers of it express any such thing? doth any such abomination issue from their arguings in the defence thereof? Or doth the doctrine which teaches believers (saints, who have tasted of the love and pardoning mercy of God, and are taught to value it infinitely above all the world) that such is the love and good-will of God towards them, in the covenant of mercy in the blood of Christ, that having appointed good works for them to walk in, for which of themselves they are insufficient, he will graciously continue to them such supplies of his Spirit and grace as that they shall never depart from following after him in ways of gospel obedience,[2]—doth this, I say, encourage any of them to continue in sin that this grace may abound? Or are any doctrines of the gospel to be measured by the rules and lines of the

[1] Ps. xxiii. 6; Jer. xxxi. 33; 1 Cor. x. 13, 1 Pet. i. 5. [2] Eph. ii. 10; 2 Cor. iii. 5.

use or abuse that the flesh is apt to make of them? or rather by their suitableness to the divine nature, whereof the saints are made partakers, and serviceableness to their carrying on to perfection in that attainment? Or is this an argument of validity against an evangelical truth, that the carnal, unbelieving heart is apt to turn it into wantonness? And whether believers walking after the Spirit,[1]—in which frame the truths of God in the gospel are savoury and sweet to them,—do experience such attendancies of the doctrine under consideration as are here intimated, I am persuaded Mr Goodwin will one day find that he hath not a little grieved the Holy Spirit of God by these reproaches cast upon the work of his grace.

Farther; doth this persuasion assure men that "they shall enjoy the love and favour of God under the practices of all manner of sin?" or can this be wrested by any racks or wheels from this assertion, that none indeed enjoy the love and favour of God but only they towards whom it is effectual to turn them from the practices of all manner of sin and wickedness, to translate them from darkness into marvellous light, and from the power of Satan into the kingdom of Jesus Christ; whom the grace that appears unto them teacheth to deny all ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; whom that love constrains not to live unto themselves, but unto him that died for them? Doth it "promise the love and favour of God to dogs returning to their vomit, and swine wallowing in the mire," when the very discriminating difference of it from that doctrine which advanceth itself into competition with it is, that such returning dogs and wallowing swine did indeed, in their best estate and condition, never truly and properly partake of the love and favour of God, but notwithstanding their disgorging and washing of themselves, they were dogs and swine still? But to what end should I longer insist on these things? I am fully persuaded Mr Goodwin himself cannot make room in his understanding to apprehend that this is indeed the true notion of the doctrine which he doth oppose. Something hath been spoken of it already, and more, the Lord assisting, will be discussed in the progress of our discourse, abundantly sufficient to manifest to the consciences of men not possessed with prejudice against the truth that it is quite of another nature and consistency, of another complexion and usefulness, than what is here represented. I cannot but add, that this way of handling controversies in religion,—namely, in proposing consequences and inferences of our own framing (wire-drawn with violence and subtilty from principles far distant from them, disowned, disavowed, and disclaimed by them on whom they are imposed) as the judgment of our adversaries, and loading them with all manner of reproaches,—is such as (being of all men in the world

[1] Rom. viii. 1, 14.

most walked in by the Arminians) I desire not to be competitor with any in, "Haud defensoribus istis," etc.

Let us now a little, in the next place, consider what Mr Goodwin gives in for that persuasion which, in opposition to the other, before by him displayed, he contendeth with all his strength to advance. I do not doubt but all that are acquainted with his way of expression ("elato cothurno") will, as they may reasonably, expect to have it brought forth μετὰ πολλῆς φαντασίας, adorned with all the gallantry and ornaments that words can contribute thereunto; for of them there is with him store to be used on all occasions. Πολὺς νομὸς ἔνθα καὶ ἔνθα.

The sum of the doctrine he is so enamoured of he gives us, chap. ix. sect. 21, p. 115. "Longa est fabula, longæ ambages;" this is "Caput rei." "It is not any danger of falling away in them that are saints and believers, or probability of it, that he maintains, but only possibility of it; such as there is that sober and careful men may voluntarily throw themselves down from the tops of houses or steeples (though, perhaps, they never come there), or run into the fire or water, and be burned or drowned, having the use of their reason and understanding to preserve them from such unusual and dismal accidents:"[1] which seems to be an instance of as remote and infirm a possibility as can likely be imagined. Yea, he tells you farther, sect. 22, "That the saints have as good security of their perseverance as he could have of his life to whom God should grant a lease of it for so long, upon condition that he did not thrust a sword through his bowels, or cast himself headlong down from a tower; so that his doctrine indulgeth to the saints as much assurance as that of perseverance, but only it grants them not a liberty of sinning:" which, I presume, his own conscience told him that neither the other doth.

But is this indeed Mr Goodwin's doctrine? is this all that he intends his arguments and proofs shall amount unto? "Ad populum phaleras." Strange, that when there is not so much as a probability or danger of falling away, yet so many and so eminent saints should so fall! How seldom is it that we hear of wise and sober men running into the fire, throwing themselves headlong from towers, thrusting swords through their own bowels! and nothing more frequent than the apostasy of saints, if these things stood upon equal terms of unlikelihood and improbability! The stony field in the parable seems to be every whit as large as the good ground, whose fruit abideth, Matt. xiii. 20, 21, 23. That ground, in Mr Goodwin's sense, is

[1] "Quidam sunt, qui jam aliquamdiu luce veritatis collustrati fuerunt, et in ejus cognitione pietatisque studio tantum profecerunt, ut habitum tandem credendi sancteque vivendi comparaverint: hos non tantum ad finem usque vitæ perseverare posse, sed facile posse, ac libenter et cum voluptate perseverare velle credimus, adeo ut non nisi cum luctu et molestia ac difficultate deficere possint."—Act. Synod. Dec. Sent. A. 5, pp. 189, 190.

true believers, so that a moiety at least must be granted to fall away, and never come to perfection. Doubtless this is not easy to be received, that one half of a company of men in succession should constantly, from one generation to another, fall into ruin in such a way as wherein there is no danger of it, or probability that it should so come to pass. Methinks, we should scarce dare to walk the streets, lest at every step we be struck down by sober men voluntarily tumbling themselves from the tops of houses, and hardly keep ourselves from being wounded with the swords wherewith they run themselves through. Was this indeed the case with David, Solomon, Peter, and others, who totally apostatized from the faith? But if it be so, if they are thus secure, whence is it that it doth arise? what are the fountains, springs, and causes of this general security? Is it from *the weakness of the opposition*, and slightness of all means of diversion from walking with God to the end, that they meet withal? or is it from *the nature of that faith* which they have, and grace wherewith they are endued? or is it that God hath graciously undertaken to safeguard them, and to preserve them in their abiding with him, that they shall not fall away? or is it that Christ intercedeth for them that their faith fail not, but be preserved, and their souls with it, by the power of God, unto the end? or from what other principle doth this security of theirs arise? from what fountain do the streams of their consolation flow? where lie the heads of this Nilus?

That it is upon the *first* account, I suppose cannot enter into the imagination of any person who ever had the least experience of walking with God, or doth so much as assent to the letter of the Scripture. How are our enemies there described, as to their number, nature, power, policy, subtlety, malice, restlessness, and advantages! with what unimaginable and inexpressible variety of means, temptations, baits, allurements, enticements, terrors, threats, do they fight against us! Such and so many are the enemies that oppose the saints of God in their abiding with him, so great and effectual the means and weapons wherewith they fight against them, so unwearied and watchful are they for the improvement of all advantages and opportunities for their ruin, that upon the supposal of the rejection of those principles and those means of their preservation which we shall find Mr Goodwin to attempt, they will be found to be so far from a state of no danger and little probability of falling, or only under a remote possibility of so doing, that it will appear utterly impossible for them to hold out and abide unto the end. Had the choicest saint of God, with all the grace that he hath received, but one of the many enemies, and that the weakest of all them which oppose every saint of God, even the feeblest, to deal withal, separated from the strength of those principles and support-

ments which Mr Goodwin seeketh to cast down, let him lie under continual exhortations to watchfulness and close walking with God, he may as easily move mountains with his finger or climb to heaven by a ladder as stand before the strength of that one enemy. Adam in paradise had no lust within to entice him, no world under the curse to seduce him, yet at the first assault of Satan, who then had no part in him, he fell quite out of covenant with God, Ps. xxx. 6, 7.

I shall give one instance, in one of the many enemies that fight against the welfare of our souls; and "ex hoc uno" we may guess at the residue of its companions. This is *indwelling sin*, whose power and policy, strength and prevalency, nearness and treachery, the Scripture exceedingly sets out, and the saints daily feel. I shall only point at some particulars:—

First, Concerning its *nearness* to us, it is indeed *in us;* and that not as a thing different from us, but it cleaveth to all the faculties of our souls. It is an enemy born with us,[1] bred up with us, carried about in our bosoms, by nature our familiar friend, our guide and counsellor, dear to us as our right eye, useful as our right hand, our wisdom, strength, etc. The apostle, Rom. vii. 17, 20, calleth it the "sin that dwelleth in us." It hath in us, in the faculties of our souls, its abode and station. It doth not pass by and away, but there it dwells, so as that it never goes from home, is never out of the way when we have any thing to do; whence, verse 21, he calls it the "evil that is present with him." When we go about any thing that is good, or have opportunity for or temptation unto any thing that is evil, it is never absent, but is ready to pluck us back or to put us on, according as it serves its ends. It is such an inmate that we can never be quit of its company; and so intimate unto us that it puts forth itself in every acting of the mind, will, or any other faculty of the soul. Though men would fain shake it off, yet when they would do good, this evil will be present with them. Then,—

Secondly, *Its universality and compass.* It is not straitened in a corner of the soul; it is spread over the whole, all the faculties, affections, and passions of it. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; it is all flesh, and nothing but flesh. It is darkness in the understanding, keeping us, at best, that we know but in part, and are still dull and slow of heart to believe. Naturally we are all darkness, nothing but darkness; and though the Lord shine into our mind, to give us in some measure the knowledge of his glory in the face of Jesus Christ, yet we are still very dark, and it is a hard work to bring in a little light upon the soul. Especially this is seen in particular practical things; though in general we have very clear light and eviction, yet when we come to particular acts of obedience, how often doth our light grow dim and fail us, causing us to judge amiss

[1] Ps. li. 5; Matt. v. 29, 30; James iii. 5, 6.

of that which is before us, by the rising of that natural darkness which is in us! It is perverseness, stubbornness, obstinacy in the *will*, that carries it with violence to disobedience and sin; it is sensuality upon the *affections*, bending them to the things of the world, alienating them from God; it is slipperiness in the *memory*, making us like leaking vessels, so that the things that we hear of the gospel do suddenly slip out, whenas other things abide firm in the cells and chambers thereof; it is senselessness and error in the *conscience*, staving it off from the performance of that duty which, in the name and authority of God, it is to accomplish: and in all these is daily enticing and seducing the heart to folly, conceiving and bringing forth sin.[1]

Thirdly, Its *power*. The apostle calls it "a law, a law in his members, a law of sin," Rom. vii. 21, 23; such a law as fights, makes war, and leads captive, selling us under sin, not suffering us to do the good we would, forcing us to do the evil we would not, drawing us off from that we delight in, bringing us under bondage to that which we abhor. A powerful, unmerciful, cruel tyrant it is. O wretched men that we are! verse 24. There is no saint of God but in the inward man doth hate sin, every sin, more than hell itself, knowing the world of evils that attend the least sin; yet is there not one of them but this powerful tyrant hath compelled and forced to so many as have made them a burden to their own souls.

Fourthly, Its *cunning, craft, and policy*. It is called in Scripture "the old man;" not from the weakness of its strength, but from the strength of its craft. "Take heed," saith the apostle, "lest any of you be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin," Heb. iii. 13. There is abundance of deceitfulness in it, being ready, fit, and prompt to beguile; lying in wait for advantages, furnished for all opportunities, and ready to close with every temptation: yea, the ways of it are so large and various, its wiles and methods for deceiving so innumerable, its fruitfulness in conceiving and bringing forth of sin so abundant, its advantages and opportunities so many, that it is like "the way of a serpent upon a rock,"—there is no tracing or finding of it out.

A serious consideration of the opposition made unto our perseverance by this one enemy, which hath so much ability, and is so restless in its warfare, never quiet, conquering nor conquered, which can be kept out of none of our counsels, excluded from none of our actings, is abundantly sufficient to evince that it is not want or weakness of enemies which putteth believers out of danger of falling away.

But all this perhaps will be granted. Enemies they have enough,

[1] John iii. 6; Matt. vi. 23, xi. 27; Luke xi. 34–36; Acts xxvi. 18; 2 Cor. vi. 14; Eph. v. 8; Isa. xxix. 18, xxxv. 5, xlii. 7; Rom. ii. 19; Col. i. 13; 1 Pet. ii. 9; Luke iv. 18; Eph iv. 18; Rev. iii 17; Matt. xxiii 16, iv. 16; John i. 5; 2 Cor. iv. 6; Luke xiv. 18; John viii. 34; Rom. vi. 16, vii. 18, viii. 7, 8; Jer. vi. 13; Gen. vi. 5; Jer. xiii. 23; Heb. ii. 1; James i. 14, 15.

and those much more diligent and powerful every one of them than all we have spoken of that now described amounteth unto; but the means of preservation which God affords the saints is that which puts them almost out of gun-shot, and gives them that golden security mentioned, which cometh not, in administering consolation, one step behind that which ariseth from the doctrine of absolute perseverance. Let, then, this be a little considered, and perhaps it will allay this whole contest. Is it, then, that such is the grace that is bestowed upon them, in respect of the principle whence it is bestowed (the eternal love of God), and the way whereby it is for them procured (the blood-shedding and intercession of Christ), with the nature of it (being the seed of God, which abideth and withereth not), and that such seems to be the nature of infused habits, that they are not removed but by the power and immediate hand of him by whom they are bestowed? Is it from hence that their assurance and security doth arise? "Alas! all this is but a fiction. There is no faith that is the fruit of election; Christ purchased it not for any by his death; infused habits are not; the grace that perisheth and that that abideth are the same. These things are but pretences." Is it, then, that God hath purposed from eternity to continue constant in his love towards them, never to leave them nor forsake them? "Nay, but of all things imaginable this is the greatest abomination, which if the Scriptures did anywhere affirm, it were sufficient to make a rational, considering man to question their authority." What then? Hath the Lord promised to give them such continued supplies of his Spirit and grace in Jesus Christ as that they shall be supported against all opposition, and preserved from all or any such sins as will certainly make a separation between God and their souls? "Nay, there is not one such promise in all the book of God; they are conditional, for the enjoyment of the good things whereof believers stand all their days upon their good behaviour." Is it, then, that the Lord Jesus, who is always heard of his Father, intercedes for them that their faith fail not, and that they may be preserved by the power of God unto salvation, and that not only upon condition of their believing, but chiefly that they may be kept and preserved in believing? Or is it that their enemies are so conquered for them and on their behalf, in the death and resurrection of Christ, that they shall never have dominion over them, that their security doth arise? Neither the one nor the other, nor any nor all of these, are the grounds and foundations of their establishment, but they are wholly given up to the powerful hand of some considerations, which Mr Goodwin expresseth and setteth out to the life, chap. ix. sect. 32–34, pp. 174, 175.

Now, because the Remonstrants[1] have always told us that God

[1] Coll. Hag. A. 5, Act. Synod. Dec. Sent. A. 5, thes. ii.

hath provided sufficiently for the perseverance of the saints, if they be not supinely wanting to themselves in the use of them, but have not hitherto, either jointly or severally, that I know of, taken the pains to discover in particular wherein that sufficiency of provision for their safety doth consist, or what the means are that God affords them to this end and purpose, Mr Goodwin, who is a learned master of all their counsels, having exactly and fully laid them forth as a solid foundation of his assertion concerning only a remote possibility of the saints' total defection, let it not seem tedious or impertinent if I transcribe, for the clearer debate of it before the reader, that whole discourse of his, and consider it in order as it lies.

"If," saith he, "it be demanded what are the means which God hath given so abundantly to the saints, to make themselves so free, so strong in inclinations to avoid things so apparently destructive to the spiritual peace and salvation of their souls, as naturally men are to forbear all such occasions which are apparently destructive to their natural lives, so that they need not to be any whit more afraid of losing their souls through their own actings than men are, or need to be, of destroying their natural lives upon the same terms? I answer,—

"First, He hath given them eyes wherewith, and light whereby, clearly and evidently to see and know that it is not more rational or man-like for men to refrain all such acts which they know they cannot perform but to the present and unavoidable destruction of their natural lives, than it is to forbear all sinful acts whatsoever, and especially such which are apparently destructive to their souls.

"Secondly, God hath not only given them the eyes and the light we speak of, wherewith and whereby clearly to see and understand the things manifested, but hath farther endued them with a faculty of consideration, wherewith to reflect upon, and review, and ponder, so oft as they please, what they see, understand, and know in this kind. Now, whatsoever a man is capable, first, of seeing and knowing, secondly, of pondering and considering, he is capable of raising or working an inclination in himself towards it, answerable in strength, vigour, and power, to any degree of goodness or desirableness which he is able to apprehend therein; for what is an inclination towards any thing but a propension and laying out of the heart and soul towards it? So that if there be worth and goodness sufficient in any object whatsoever to bear it; and, secondly, if a man be in a capacity of discovering and apprehending this good clearly; and, thirdly, be in a like capacity of considering this vision,—certainly he is in a capacity and at liberty to work himself to what strength or degree of desire and inclination towards it he pleaseth. Now, it is certain to every man that there is more good in abstaining from things either eminently dangerous or apparently destructive to his soul, than in forbearing things apparently destructive to his natural

being. Secondly, As evident it is that every man is more capable of attaining or coming to the certain knowledge and clear apprehending of this excess of good to him in the former good than in the latter. Thirdly, Neither is it a thing less evident than either of the former, that every man is as capable of ruminating or re-apprehending the said excess of good as much and as oft as he pleaseth, as he is simply of apprehending it at all. Which supposed as undeniably true, it follows with a high hand, and above all contradiction, that the saints may (and have means and opportunities fair and full for that purpose) plant inclinations or dispositions in themselves to refrain all manner of sins apparently dangerous and destructive to the safety of their souls, fuller of energy, vigour, life, strength, power, than the natural inclination in them which teacheth them to refrain all occasions which they know must needs be accompanied with the destruction of their natural beings. Therefore, if they be more, or so much, afraid of destroying their lives voluntarily and knowingly (as by casting themselves into the fire or the water, or the like) than they are of falling away through sin, the fault or reason thereof is not at all in the doctrine, which affirms or informs them that there is a possibility that they fall away, but in themselves and their own voluntary negligence. They have means and opportunities (as we have proved) in abundance to render themselves every whit as secure, yea, and more secure, touching the latter, as they are or reasonably can be concerning the former."

Ans. When I first cast an eye on this discourse of Mr Goodwin, I confess I was surprised to as high a degree of admiration, and some other affections also, as by any thing I had observed in his whole book; as having not met (if without offence I may be allowed to speak my apprehensions) with any discourse whatsoever of so transcendent a derogation from, and direct tendency to the overthrow of, the grace of Christ, but only in what is remembered, by Austin, Hilary, Fulgentius, with some others, of the disputes of Pelagius, Cœlestius, Julianus, with their followers, and the Socinians of late, with whom Mr Goodwin would not be thought to have joined in their opposition to the merit and grace of Christ. As I said, then, before, if this should prove in the issue to be the sum of the means afforded to preserve the saints from apostasy and falling away into ruin, I shall be so far from opposing a *possibility* of their defection that I shall certainly conclude their *perseverance to be impossible*, being fully persuaded that, with all the contribution of strength which the considerations mentioned are able of themselves to afford unto them, they are no more able to meet their adversaries, who come against them with twenty thousand subtleties and temptations, than a man with a straw and a feather is to combat with and overcome a royal army. The Scripture tells us, and we thought it had

been so, that we "are kept by the power of God unto salvation;" and that to this end he puts forth "the exceeding greatness of his power in them that believe, according to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ when he raised him from the dead;" whereby he "strengthens them with all might, according to his glorious power," "making them meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light."[1] It seems, though there be a glorious sound of words in these and innumerable the like expressions of the engagement of the power and faithfulness of God for the safeguarding of his saints, yet all this is but an empty noise and beating of the air; that which is indeed material to this purpose consisting in "certain considerations which rational men may have concerning their present state and future condition." But let us a little consider the discourse itself.

First, It is all along magnificently supposed that there is the same power and ability in a rational, enlightened man to deliberate and conclude of things in reference unto the practical condition of his spiritual estate as there is of his natural, and that this ability is constantly resident with him, to make use of upon all occasions, whatever our Saviour say to the contrary,—namely, that "without him we can do nothing," John xv. 5.

Secondly (to make way for that), That such an one is able to know and to desire the things of his peace in a spiritual and useful manner, notwithstanding the vanity of those many seemingly fervent prayers of the saints in the Scripture, that God would give them understanding in these things, and his manifold promises of that grace.[2]

Thirdly, That upon such deliberation, men are put into a capacity and liberty, or are enabled, to work themselves to what strength or degree of desire and inclination towards that good considered they please; and according as the good is that men apprehend (as abiding with God is the greatest good), such will be the strength and the vigour and power of their inclination thereto. That they have a law in their members rebelling against the law of their minds, and leading them captive under the law of sin, needs not to be taken notice of. This sufficiency, it seems, is of themselves. He was a weak, unskilful man who supposed that of ourselves we could not think a good thought, seeing we are such perfect lords and masters of all good thoughts and actings whatsoever.[3]

Fourthly, The whole sum of this discourse of the means afforded believers to enable them to persevere amounts to this, that being rational men, they may, first, consider that some kinds of sins will destroy them and separate them from God, and that by obedience they shall come to the greatest good imaginable; whereupon it is in their power so strongly to incline their hearts unto obedience that

[1] 1 Pet. i. 5; Eph. i. 17–20; Col. i. 11, 12. [2] Ps. cxix. 144; 1 Cor. ii. 14.
[3] Rom. vii. 8–24; 2 Cor. iii. 5.

they shall be in no more danger of departing from God than a wise and rational man is of killing or wilfully destroying himself: the first part whereof may be performed by them who are no saints, the latter not by any saint whatsoever.

And is not this noble provision for the security and assurance of the saints enough to make them cast away with speed all their interest in the unchangeable purposes and gracious and faithful promises of God, intercession of Christ, sealing of the Spirit, and all those sandy and trivial supports of their faith which hitherto they have rejoiced in? And whatever experience they have, or testimony from the word they do receive, of the darkness and weakness of their minds, the stubbornness of their wills, with the strong inclinations that are in them to sin and falling away,—whatever be the oppositions from above them, about them, within them, on the right hand and on the left, that they have to wrestle withal,[1]—let them give up themselves to the hand of their own manlike considerations and weighing of things, which will secure them against all danger or probability of falling away; for if they be but capable, first, of seeing and knowing, secondly, of pondering and considering, and that rationally (it matters not whether these things are fruits of the Spirit of grace or no, nay, it is clear they must not be so), that such and such evil is to be avoided, and that there is so and so great a good to be obtained by continuing in obedience, they may raise and work inclinations in themselves, answerable, in strength, vigour, and power, to any degree of goodness which they apprehend in what they see and ponder.

The whole of the "ample sufficient means" afforded by God to the saints to enable them to persevere branching itself into these two heads,—first, The rational considering what they have to do; secondly, Their vigorous inclination of their hearts to act suitably and answerably to their considerations,—I shall, in a word, consider them apart.

First, The considerations mentioned, of *evil* to be avoided and *good* to be attained (I mean that which may put men upon creating those strong inclinations: for such considerations may be without any such consequence, as in her that cried, "Video meliora proboque, deteriora sequor"), are either issues and products of men's own natural faculties, and deduced out of the power of them, so that as men they may put themselves upon them at any time; or they are fruits of the Spirit of his grace, who "worketh in us both to will and to do of his good pleasure."[2] If they be the latter, I ask, seeing all grace is of promise, whether hath God promised to give and continue this grace of self-consideration unto believers or no? If he hath, whether *absolutely* or *conditionally?* If *absolutely*, then he

[1] Eph. vi. 12; Heb. xii. 1; Rom. vii. 17. [2] Phil. ii. 13.

hath promised absolutely to continue some grace in them; which is all we desire. If *conditionally*, then would I know what that condition is on which God hath promised that believers shall so consider the things mentioned. And of the condition which shall be expressed, it may farther be inquired whether it be any grace of God, or only a mere act of the rational creature as such, without any immediate in-working of the will and deed by God? Whatsoever is answered, the question will not go to rest until it be granted that either it is a grace absolutely promised of God, which is all we desire, or a pure act of the creature contradistinct thereunto, which answers the first inquiry. Let it, then, be granted that the considerations intimated are no other but such as a rational man who is enlightened to an assent to the truth of God may so exert and exercise as he pleaseth; then is there a foundation laid of all the ground of perseverance that is allowed the saints in their own endeavours, as men without the assistance of any grace of God. Now, these considerations, be they what they will, must needs be beneath one single good thought, for as for *that* we have no sufficiency of ourselves; yea, vanity and nothing, for without Christ we can do nothing; yea, evil and displeasing to God, as are all the thoughts and imaginations of our hearts that are only such.[1] I had supposed that no man in the least acquainted with what it is to serve God under temptations, and what the work of saving souls is, but had been sufficiently convinced of the utter insufficiency of such rational considerations, flowing only from conviction, to be a solid foundation of abiding with God unto the end. If men's houses of profession are built on such sands as these, we need not wonder to see them so frequently falling to the ground.

Secondly, Suppose these considerations to act their part upon the stage raised for them, to the greatest applause that can be expected or desired, yet that which comes next upon the theatre will, I fear, foully miscarry, and spoil the whole plot of the play,—that is, "men's vigorous inclination of their hearts to the good things pondered on to what height they please;" for besides that,—

First, It is liable to the same *examination* that passed upon its associates before, or an inquiry from whence he comes, whether from heaven or men; upon which I doubt not but he may easily be discovered to be "a vagabond upon the earth," to have no pass from heaven, and so be rendered liable to the law of God.

Secondly, It would be inquired whether it hath a consistency with the whole design of the apostle, Rom. vii. And therefore,—

Thirdly, It is utterly denied that men, the best of men, have *in* themselves and *of* themselves, arising upon the account of any considerations whatsoever, a power, ability, or strength, vigorously or at

[1] 2 Cor. iii. 5; John xv. 5; Gen. viii. 21.

all acceptably to God, to incline their hearts to the performance of any thing that is spiritually good, or in a gospel tendency to walking with God. All the promises of God, all the prayers of the saints, all their experience, the whole design of God in laying up all our stores of strength and grace in Christ, jointly cry out against it for a counterfeit pretence. In a word, that men are able to plant in themselves inclinations and dispositions to refrain all manner of sin destructive to the safety of their souls, fuller of energy, vigour, life, strength, power, than those that are in them to avoid things apparently tending to the destruction of their natural lives, is an assertion as full of energy, strength, and vigour, life, and poison, for the destruction and eversion of the grace of God in Christ, as any which can be invented.

To shut up this discourse and to proceed: If these are the solid foundations of peace and consolation which the saints have concerning their perseverance; if these be the means "sufficient," "abundantly sufficient," afforded them for their preservation, that are laid in the balance, as to the giving of an evangelical, genuine assurance, with the decrees and purposes, the covenant, promises, and oath of God, the blood and intercession of Christ, the anointing and sealing of the Spirit of grace,—I suppose we need not care how soon we enter the lists with any as to the comparing of the doctrines under contest, in reference to their influence into the obedience and consolation of the saints; which with its issue, in the close of this discourse, shall, God willing, be put to the trial.

Now, that I may lay a more clear foundation for what doth ensue, I shall briefly deduce not only the *doctrine* itself, but also the *method* wherein I shall handle it, from a portion of Scripture, in which the whole is summarily comprised, and branched forth into suitable heads, for the confirmation and vindication thereof. And this also is required to the main of my design, it being not so directly to convince stout gainsayers, in vanquishing their objections, as to strengthen weak believers, in helping them against temptations; and therefore I shall at the entrance hold out that whereinto their faith must be ultimately resolved,—the authority of God in his word being that ark alone whereon it can rest the sole of its foot. Now, this is the fourth chapter of Isaiah, of which take this short account: It is a chapter made up of gracious promises, given to the church in a calamitous season; the season itself is described, verses 25 and 26 of the third chapter, and the first of this,—all holding out a distressed estate, a low condition. It is, indeed, God's method, to make out gracious promises to his people when their condition seems most deplorable,—to sweeten their souls with a sense of his love in the multitude of the perplexing thoughts which in distracted times are ready to tumultuate in them.

The foundation of all the following promises lies in the second verse, even the giving out of the "Branch of the LORD" and the "Fruit of the earth" for beauty and glory to the remnant of Israel. Who it is who is the "Branch of the LORD" the Scripture tells us in sundry places, Isa. xi. 1; Jer. xxiii. 5, xxxiii. 15; Zech. iii. 8. The Lord Jesus Christ, the promise of whom is the church's only supportment in every trial or distress it hath to undergo, he is this branch and fruit; and he is placed in the head here as the great fountain-mercy, from whence all others do flow. In those that follow, the persons to whom those promises are made, and the matter or substance of them, are observable. The persons have various appellations and descriptions in this chapter. They are called (first) "The escaping of Israel," verse 2; "They that are left in Zion," verse 3; "Jerusalem" itself, verse 4; "The dwelling-places and assemblies of mount Zion," verse 5. That the same individual persons are intended in all these several appellations is not questionable. It is but in reference to the several acts of God's dwelling with them, and outgoings of his love and good-will, both eternal and temporal, towards them, that they come under this variety of names and descriptions. First, In respect of his eternal designation of them to life and salvation, they are said to be "Written among the living," or unto life "in Jerusalem;" their names are in the Lamb's book of life from the foundation of the world,[1] and they are recorded in the purpose of God from all eternity. Secondly, In respect of their deliverance and actual redemption from the bondage of death and Satan, which for ever prevail upon the greatest number of the sons of men, shadowed out by their deliverance from the Babylonish captivity (pointed at in this place), they are said to be "A remnant, an escaping, such as are left and remain in Jerusalem."[2] From the perishing lump of mankind God doth by Christ snatch a remnant (whom he will preserve), like a brand out of the fire. Thirdly, In respect of their enjoyment of God's ordinances and word, and his presence with them therein, they are called "The daughter of Zion," and "The dwelling-places thereof."[3] There did God make known his mind and will, and walked with his people in the beauties of holiness: these are they to whom these promises are made, the elect, redeemed, and called of God; or those who, being elected and redeemed, shall in their several generations be called, according to his purpose who worketh all things according to the counsel of his own will.

For the matter of these promises, they may be reduced to these three heads:—first, Of *justification*, verse 2; secondly, Of *sancti-*

[1] Rev. iii. 12, xiii. 8; Luke x. 20.

[2] Rev. v. 9; Eph. v. 25–27; Zech. iii. 2; John xvii. 9; Rom. viii. 33.

[3] Ps. xlviii. 11–14, xvi. 1–3, etc.; Jer. l. 5; Zech. viii. 2; John xii. 15; Ps. cx. 3; Isa. xlix. 14.

fication, verses 3, 4; thirdly, Of *perseverance*, verses 5, 6. First, Of *justification*, Christ is made to them, or given unto them, for beauty and glory; which how it is done the Holy Ghost tells us: Isa. lxi. 10, "I will greatly rejoice in the LORD, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness," saith the church. He puts upon poor deformed creatures the glorious robe of his own righteousness, to make us comely in his presence and the presence of his Father, Zech. iii. 3, 4. Through him, his being given unto us, "made unto us of God righteousness," becoming "the Lord our righteousness,"[1] do we find free acceptation, as beautiful and glorious, in the eyes of God. But this is not all. He doth not only adorn us without, but also wash us within. The apostle acquaints us that that was his design, Eph. v. 25–27; and therefore you have, secondly, the promise of *sanctification* added, verses 3, 4. Verse 3, you have the thing itself: they "shall be called holy," made so,—called so by him who "calleth things that are not as though they were," and by that call gives them to be that which he calls them. He said, "Let there be light; and there was light," Gen. i. 3. And then the manner how it becomes to be so, verse 4; *first*, setting out the efficient cause, "the Spirit of judgment, and the Spirit of burning,"—that is, of holiness and light; and, *secondly*, the way of his producing this great effect, "washing away filth and purging away blood." Spiritual filth and blood is the defilement of sin; the Scripture, to set out its abomination, comparing it to the things of the greatest abhorrency to our nature, even as that is to the nature of God.[2] And this is the second promise that in and by the "Branch of the LORD" is here made to them "who are written unto life in Jerusalem." But now, lest any should suppose that both these are for a season only, that they are dying privileges, perishing mercies, jewels that may be lost, so that though the persons to whom these promises are made are once made glorious and comely, being in Christ freely accepted, yet they may again become odious in the sight of God and be utterly rejected,—that being once washed, purged, cleansed, they should yet return to wallow in the mire, and so become wholly defiled and abominable,—in the third place he gives a promise of *perseverance*, in the last two verses, and that expressed with allusion to the protection afforded unto the people of the Jews in the wilderness by a cloud and pillar of fire; which as they were created and instituted signs of the presence of God, so they gave assured protection, preservation, and direction, to the people in all their ways. The

[1] 1 Cor. i. 30; Isa. liv. 17, xlv. 24, 25; Jer. xxiii. 6; Rom. v. 1, viii. 1; Col. ii. 10.

[2] Ezek. xi. 19; John iii. 5; Rom. viii. 1; John xvi. 8–11; Ps. xxxviii. 5, 7; Prov. xiii. 5, 6; Isa. i. 5, 6, lxiv. 6; Ezek. xvi. 4, 5, xxiv. 6; Hos. viii. 8; Zech. xiii. 1; Rom. iii. 13; 2 Pet. ii. 22.

sum of the whole intendment of the Holy Ghost in these two verses seeming to be comprised in the last words of the fifth, and they being a suitable bottom unto the ensuing discourse, comprising, as they stand in relation to the verses foregoing, the whole of my aim, with the way or method wherein it may conveniently be delivered, I shall a little insist upon them: "Upon all the glory shall be a defence."

The words are a gospel promise expressed in law terms, or a new testament mercy in old testament clothes: the subject of it is "All the glory;" and the thing promised is "A defence over it," or upon it. By "The glory," some take the people themselves to be intended, who are the glory of God, Isa. xlvi. 13, in whom he will be glorified, and who are said to be made glorious, chap. iv. 2. But the pillar of fire and the cloud lead us another way. As the protection here promised must answer the protection given by them of old, so the glory here mentioned must answer that which was the glory of that people, when they had their preservation and direction from these signs of the presence of God in the midst of them. It is very true, the sign of God's presence among them itself, and the protection received thereby, is sometimes called his "glory," Ezek. x. 4, 18; but here it is plainly differenced from it, that being afterward called a "defence." That which most frequently was called the "glory" in the ancient dispensation of God to his people was the ark. When this was taken by the Philistines, the wife of Phinehas calls her son I-chabod, and says, "The glory is departed from Israel," 1 Sam. iv. 21, 22; which the Holy Ghost mentions again, Ps. lxxviii. 61, "And delivered his strength into captivity, and his glory into the enemy's hand." The tabernacle, or the tent wherein it was placed, is mentioned, verse 60, "He forsook the tabernacle of Shiloh, the tent which he placed among them;" and the people to whom it was given, verse 62, "He gave his people over also unto the sword;"—that ark being the glory and strength which went into captivity when he forsook the tabernacle, and gave his people to the sword. That this ark, the "glory" of old, was a type of Jesus Christ (besides the end and aim of its institution, with its use and place of its abode), appears from the mercy-seat or plate of gold that was laid upon it; which Jesus Christ is expressly said to be, Rom. iii. 25, 26, compared with Heb. ix. 5. It is he who is the "glory" here mentioned, not considered absolutely and in his own person, but as he is made "beauty and glory" unto his people, as he is made unto them righteousness and holiness, according to the tenor of the promises insisted on before. And this is indeed all the glory of the elect of God,[1] even the presence of Christ with them, as their justification and sanctification, their righteousness and holiness.

The matter of the promise made in reference to this "glory" and

[1] Isa. xlv. 25.

them upon whom it doth abide is, that there "shall be a defence upon it." The word translated here "A defence" comes from a root that is but once read in Scripture, Deut. xxxiii. 12, where it is rendered to cover: "The LORD shall cover him all the day long." So it properly signifies. From a covering to a protection or a defence is an easy metaphor, a covering being given for that end and purpose. And this is the native signification of the word "protego," "to defend by covering;" as Abimelech called Abraham "the covering of Sarah's eyes," or a protection to her, Gen. xx. 16. The allusion also of a shade, which in Scripture is so often taken for a defence,[1] ariseth from hence. This word itself is used twice more, and in both places signifies a bride-chamber, Ps. xix. 5, Joel ii. 16, from the peace, covert, and protection of such a place. The name of the mercy-seat is also of the same root with this. In this place it is, by common consent, rendered "A defence" or protection, being so used either by allusion to that refreshment that the Lord Christ, the great bride-groom, gives to his bride in his banqueting-house,[2] or rather in pursuit of the former similitude of the cloud that was over the tabernacle and the ark, which represented the glory of that people. Thus, this "defence" or covering is said to be "upon" or above the "glory," as the cloud was over the tabernacle, and as the mercy-seat lay upon the ark. Add only this much to what hath been spoken (which is also affirmed in the beginning of the verse), namely, that this defence is "created," or is an immediate product of the mighty power of God, not requiring unto it the least concurrence of creature power, and the whole will manifest the intendment of the Lord everlastingly to safeguard the spiritual glories of his saints in Christ.

As was before shown, there are two parts of our *spiritual glory*, the one purely *extrinsical*, to wit, the love and favour of God unto us, his free and gracious acceptation of us in Christ. On this part of our glory there is this defence created, that it shall abide for ever, it shall never be removed. His own glory and excellencies are engaged for the preservation of this excellency and glory of his people. This sun, though it may be for a while eclipsed, yet shall never set, nor give place to an evening that shall make long the shade thereof; whom God once freely accepts in Christ, he will never turn away his love from them, nor cast them utterly out of his favour. The other is *within us*, and that is our sanctification, our portion from God by the Spirit of holiness, and the fruits thereof, in our faith, love, and obedience unto him. And on this part of our glory there is this defence, that this Spirit shall never utterly be dislodged from that soul wherein he makes his residence, nor resign his habitation to the spirit of the world,—that his fruit shall never so decay as that the fruits of

[1] Ps. xvii. 8, xxxvi. 7, lvii. 1, lxiii. 7, cxxi. 5; Isa. xxx. 2, xlix. 2; Ezek. xxxi. 6, etc.
[2] Cant. ii. 4.

Sodom and the grapes of Gomorrah should grow in their room, nor they wherein they are everlastingly, utterly, and wickedly, grow barren in departing from the living God. These two make up their perseverance whereof we speak. Whom God accepts in Christ, he will continue to do so for ever; whom he quickens to walk with him, they shall do it to the end. And these three things, *acceptance with God, holiness from God,* and *a defence upon them* both unto the end, all free and in Christ, are that threefold cord of the covenant of grace which cannot be broken.

In the handling, then, of the doctrine proposed unto consideration, I shall, the Lord assisting, show,—

First, That the love and favour of God, as to the free acceptation of believers with him in Christ, is constant, abiding, and shall never be turned away; handling at large the principles both of its being and manifestation.

Secondly, That the Spirit and grace of sanctification, which they freely receive from him, shall never utterly be extinguished in them, but so remain as that they shall abide with him for ever; the sophistical separation of which two parts of our doctrine is the greatest advantage our adversaries have against the whole. And [I shall] demonstrate,—

Thirdly, The real and causal influences which this truth hath into the obedience and consolation of the saints, considered both absolutely, and compared with the doctrine which is set up in competition with it.

In the pursuit of which particulars I shall endeavour to enforce and press those places of Scripture wherein they are abundantly delivered, and vindicate them from all the exceptions put in to our inferences from them by Mr Goodwin in his "Redemption Redeemed;" as also answer all the arguments which he hath, with much labour and industry, collected and improved in opposition to the truth in hand. Take, then, only these few previous observations, and I shall insist fully upon the proof and demonstration of the first position, concerning the unchangeableness of the love of God towards his, to whom he gives Jesus Christ for beauty and glory, and freely accepts them in him:—

First, As to their *inherent holiness,* the question is not concerning *acts,* either as to their vigour, which may be abated, or as to their frequency, which may be interrupted; but only as to the spirit and habit of it, which shall never depart. We do not say they cannot sin, fall into many sins, great sins, which the Scripture plainly affirms of all the saints that went before, (and who of them living doth not this day labour under the truth of it?) but through the presence of God with them, upon such grounds and principles as shall afterward be insisted on, they cannot, shall not, sin away the Spirit and habit of grace (which without a miracle cannot be done away by any one

act, and God will not work miracles for the destruction of his children), so as to fall into that state wherein they were before they were regenerated, and of the children of God become children of the devil, tasting of the second death after they have been made partakers of the first resurrection, Rev xx. 6.[1]

Secondly, The question is not about the *decay of any grace, but the loss of all,* not about sickness and weakness, but about death itself; which alone we say they shall be preserved from. Neither do we say that believers are endowed with any such rich and plentiful stock of grace as that they may spend upon it without new supplies all their days; but grant that they stand in continual need of the renewed communication of that grace which hath its abode and residence in their souls, and of that actual assistance whereby any thing that is truly and spiritually good is wrought in them.[2]

Thirdly, Whereas there is a twofold impossibility,—*first,* that which is absolutely and simply so in its own nature, and, *secondly,* that which is so only upon some supposition,—we say the total falling away of the saints is impossible only in this latter sense, the unchangeable decree and purpose of God, his faithful promises and oath, the mediation of the Lord Jesus, being in the assertion supposed. And,—

Fourthly, whereas we affirm they shall assuredly continue unto the end, the certainty and assurance intimated is not *mentis* but *entis,* not subjective but objective, not always in the person persevering, but always relating to the thing itself.[3]

Fifthly, That the three things formerly mentioned, acceptance with God, holiness from God, and the defence upon them both unto the end, are that threefold cord of the covenant which cannot be broken. This will appear by comparing these two eminent places together, which afterward must more fully be insisted on, Jer. xxxi. 33, 34, xxxii. 38–40. In general, God undertakes to be "their God," and that they shall be "his people," chap. xxxi. 33, xxxii. 38. And this he manifests in three things:—*First,* That he will *accept* them freely, give them to find great favour before him, in the forgiveness of their sins; for which alone he hath any quarrel with them: "I will," saith he, "forgive their iniquity, and remember their sin no more," Jer. xxxi. 34; as it is again repeated Heb. viii. 12. *Secondly,* That they shall have *sanctification* and holiness from him: "I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts," Jer. xxxi. 33; "I will put my fear in their hearts," chap. xxxii. 40; which Ezekiel, chap. xxxvi. 27, calls the "putting his Spirit in them," who is the author of that grace and holiness which he doth bestow. *Thirdly,* That in both these there

[1] Rev. ii. 5, iii. 2; Isa. lvii. 17, 18; Hos. xiv. 4; Isa. lix. 21; John xiv. 16; 1 John iii. 9, i. 8; James iii. 2; 1 Kings viii. 38; Isa. lxiv. 5, 6.

[2] Ps. xxiii. 6; Isa. xxxv. 1, 2, etc.; John xv. 3–7; Rom. xi. 18; John i. 16; Col. ii. 19; Luke xvii. 5; Phil. ii 13.

[3] Isa. xlix. 14–16 lxv. 17; Cant. v. 2, 6; Ps. lxxiii. 26.

shall be *a continuance for ever:* Jer. xxxii. 40, "I will not turn away from them to do them good, but I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me;" or, as verse 39, "They shall fear me for ever;" which distinguisheth this covenant from the former made with their fathers, in that that was broken, which this shall never be, chap. xxxi. 32. This is the crowning mercy, that renders both the others glorious:—as to acceptation, he will not depart from us; as to sanctification, we shall not depart from him.

CHAPTER II.

THE PERSEVERANCE OF THE SAINTS ARGUED FROM THE IMMUTABILITY OF THE DIVINE NATURE.

The thesis proposed for confirmation—The fivefold foundation of the truth thereof—Of the unchangeableness of the nature of God, and the influence thereof into the confirmation of the truth in hand—Mal. iii. 6, considered and explained—James i. 16–18 opened—Rom. xi. 29 explained and vindicated—The conditions on which grace is asserted to be bestowed and continued, discussed—The vanity of them evinced in sundry instances—Of vocation, justification, and sanctification—Isa. xl. 27–31 opened and improved to the end aimed at; also Isa. xliv. 1–8—The sum of the first argument—Mal. iii. 6, with the whole argument from the immutability of God at large vindicated—Falsely proposed by Mr G.; set right and re-enforced—Exceptions removed—Sophistical comparisons exploded—Distinct dispensations, according to distinction of a people—Alteration and change properly and directly assigned to God by Mr G.—The theme in question begged by him—Legal approbation of duties and conditional acceptation of persons confounded; as also God's command and purpose—The unchangeableness of God's decrees granted to be intended in Mal. iii. 6—The decree directly in that place intended—The decree of sending Christ not immutable, upon Mr G.'s principles—The close of the vindication of this first argument.

THE certain, infallible continuance of the love and favour of God unto the end towards his, those whom he hath once freely accepted in Jesus Christ, notwithstanding the interposition of any such supposals as may truly be made, having foundation in the things themselves, being the first thing proposed, comes now to be demonstrated.

Now, the foundation of this the Scripture lays upon five unchangeable things, which eminently have an influence into the truth thereof: first, Of the Nature; secondly, The Purposes; thirdly, The Covenant; fourthly, The Promises; fifthly, The Oath of God;—every one whereof being engaged herein, the Lord makes use of to manifest the unchangeableness of his love towards those whom he hath once graciously accepted in Christ.

First, he hath laid the shoulders of the unchangeableness of his own *nature* to this work: Mal. iii. 6, "I am the LORD, I change not: therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed." These "sons of

Jacob" are the sons of the faith of Jacob, the Israel of God, not all the seed of Jacob according to the flesh.[1] The Holy Ghost in this prophecy makes an eminent distinction between these two, chap. iii. 16, 17, iv. 1, 2. The beginning of this chapter contains a most evident and clear prediction and prophecy of the bringing in of the kingdom of Christ in the gospel, wherein he was to purge his floor, and throw out the chaff to be burned, Matt. iii. 12. This his appearance makes great work in the visible church of the Jews. Very many of those who looked and waited for that coming of his are cut off and cast out, as persons that have neither lot nor portion in the mercy wherewith it is attended.[2] Though they said within themselves that they had Abraham to their father, and were the children and posterity of Jacob, yet, Mal. iii. 5, to them who are only the carnal seed, and do also walk in the ways of the flesh, he threatens a sore revenge and swift destruction, when others shall be invested with all the eminent mercies which the Lord Christ brings along with him. Lest the true sons of Jacob should be terrified with the dread of the approaching day, and say, as David[3] did when the Lord made a breach upon Uzzah, "Who can stand before so holy a God? shall not *we* also in the issue be consumed?" he discovereth to them the foundation of their preservation to the end, even the unchangeableness of his own nature and being, whereunto his love to them is conformed; plainly intimating that unless himself and his everlasting deity be subject and liable to alteration and change (which once to imagine were, what lieth in us, to cast him down from his excellency), it could not be that they should be cast off for ever and consumed. These are the tribes of Jacob and the preserved of Israel, which Jesus Christ was sent to raise up, Isa. xlix. 6; the house of Jacob, which he takes from the womb, and carries unto old age, unto hoary hairs, and forsaketh not, chap. xlvi. 3, 4.

This is confirmed, James i. 16–18, "Do not err, my beloved brethren. Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning. Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth." He begets us of his own will by the word of truth; for whatsoever men do pretend, we are born again, "not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God," John i. 13. "Now herein," saith the apostle, "we do receive from him good and perfect gifts,—gifts distinguished from the common endowments of others." Yea, but they are failing ones perhaps, such as may flourish for a season, and be but children of a night, like Jonah's gourd. Though God hath begotten us of his own will, and bestowed good and per-

[1] Rom. ix. 6, xi. 4–6. [2] Isa. xlix. 3–6; Luke ii. 34; Rom. ix. 30, 31.

[3] The expression was used not by David in reference to Uzzah, but by the men of Beth-shemesh. See 1 Sam. vi. 20.—Ed.

fect gifts upon us, yet he may cast us off for ever. "Do not err, my beloved brethren," saith the apostle; "these things come from the 'Father of lights.' God himself is the fountain of all lights of grace which we have received; and with him 'there is no variableness, neither shadow of turning,'—not the least appearance of any change or alteration." And if the apostle did not in this place argue from the immutability of the divine nature to the unchangeableness of his love towards those whom he hath begotten and bestowed such light and grace upon, there were no just reason of mentioning that attribute and property there.

Hence, Rom. xi. 29, the "gifts and calling of God" are said to be "without repentance." The gifts of his effectual calling (ἧν διὰ δυοῖν) shall never be repented of. They are from Him with whom there is no change.

The words are added by the apostle to give assurance of the certain accomplishment of the purpose of God towards the remnant of the Jews according to the election of grace. What the principal mercies were that were in God's intendment to them, and whereof by their effectual calling they shall be made partakers, he tells us, verses 26, 27: the Deliverer or Redeemer, which comes out of Sion, shall, according to the covenant of grace, turn them from ungodliness, the Lord taking away their sins. Sanctification and justification by Christ, the two main branches of the new covenant (Jer. xxxi. 31–34, xxxii. 38–40; Ezek. xxxvi. 25–28; Heb. viii. 8–12, x. 16, 17), do make up the mercy purposed for them. The certainty of the collation of this mercy upon them, notwithstanding the interposition of any present obstruction (amongst which their enmity to the gospel was most eminent, and lay ready to be objected), the apostle argueth from the unchangeableness of the love of election, wherewith the Lord embraced them from eternity: "As touching the election, they are beloved." And farther to manifest on that account the fulfilling of what he is in the proof and demonstration of,—namely, that though the major part of "Israel according to the flesh" were rejected, yet that the "election should obtain, and all Israel be saved,"—he tells them that that calling of God, whereby he will make out to them those eternally-designed mercies, shall not be repented of; eminently in that assertion distinguishing the grace whereof he speaks from all such common gifts and such outward dispensations as might be subject to a removal from them on whom they are bestowed. And if, upon any supposition or consideration imaginable, the mercies mentioned may be taken away, the assertion comes very short of the proof of that for which it is produced.

Against this plain expression of the apostle, that "the gifts and calling of God are without repentance," Mr Goodwin puts in sundry exceptions, to weaken the testimony it bears in this case, chap. viii.

sect. 57; which because they have been already sufficiently evinced of weakness, falsehood, and impertinency, by his learned antagonist,[1] I shall only take up that which he mainly insists upon, and farther manifest its utter uselessness for the end for which it is produced. Thus, then, he pleads: "The 'gifts and calling of God' may be said to be 'without repentance,' because, let men continue the same persons which they were when the donation or collation of any gift was first made by God unto them, he never changes or altereth his dispensations towards them, unless it be for the better, or in order to their farther good; in which case he cannot be said to repent of what he had given. But in case men shall change and alter from what they were when God first dealt graciously with them, especially if they shall notoriously degenerate or cast away the principles, or divest themselves of that very qualification on which, as it were, God grafted his benefit or gift; in this case, though he recall his gift, he cannot be said to repent of his giving it, because the terms on which he gave it please him still, only the persons to whom he gave it, and who pleased him when he gave it them, have now rendered themselves unpleasing to him."

Two things are here asserted:—1. That if men continue the same, or in *the same state and condition* wherein they were when God bestowed his gifts and graces upon them, then God never changeth nor altereth,—his dispensations towards them abide the same. 2. That there are certain *qualifications* in men upon which God grafts his grace; which whilst they abide, his gifts and graces abide upon them also, and therefore are said to be 'without repentance;' but if they are lost, God recalls his gifts, and that without any change. Let us a little consider both these assertions.

And, first, It being evident that it is spiritual grace and mercy of which the apostle speaks, as was manifested, for they are such as flow from the covenant of the Redeemer, Rom. xi. 26, 27, sanctification and justification being particularly mentioned, let us consider what is the condition of men when God invests them with these mercies, that we may be able to instruct them how to abide in that condition, and so make good the possession of the grace and mercy bestowed on them. And, to keep close to the text, let our instance be in the three eminent mercies of the gospel intimated in that place: 1. *Vocation;* 2. *Sanctification;* 3. *Justification.*

The gift and grace of vocation is confessedly here intended, being expressly mentioned in the words, ἡ κλῆσις τοῦ Θεοῦ, that "calling" which is an effect of the covenant of grace, verse 29. Consider we, then, what is the state of men when God first calls them and gives them this gift and favour, that, if it seem so good, we may exhort them to a continuance therein.

[1] Dr George Kendall. See prefatory note.—Ed.

Now, this state, with the qualifications of it, is a state,—1. Of *death:* John v. 25, "The dead hear the voice of the Son of God." Christ speaks to them who are dead, and so they live.[1] 2. Of *darkness,* Acts xxvi. 18; "God calleth them out of darkness into his marvellous light," 1 Pet. ii. 9,—a state of ignorance and alienation from God, Eph. iv. 18. The grace of vocation, or effectual calling, finding men in a state of enmity to God and alienation from him, if they may be prevailed withal to continue in such still, this gift shall never be recalled nor repented of!

But perhaps the gift and grace of sanctification finds men in a better condition, in a state wherein if they abide then that also shall abide with them for ever. The Scripture so abounds in the description of this state that we shall not need to hesitate about it: Eph. ii. 1, 2, "You hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins." Quickening and renewing grace is given to persons dead in sins, and is so far from depending as to its unchangeableness upon their continuance in the state wherein it finds them, that it consists in a real change and translation of them from that state or condition. The apostle sets out this at large, Tit. iii. 3–5, "We ourselves were sometimes foolish," etc. The state of men when God bestows these gifts upon them is positively expressed in sundry particulars, verse 3; the qualifications on which this gift or grace is grafted (of which Mr Goodwin speaks afterward), negatively, verse 5. It is not on any work that we have done; which is unquestionably exclusive of all those stocks of qualifications which are intimated, whereon the gifts and graces of God should be grafted. The gift itself here bestowed is the "washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost," saving us through "mercy" from the state and condition before described. In brief, that the condition wherein this grace of God finds the sons of men is a state of death,[2] blood,[3] darkness, blindness,[4] enmity, curse, and wrath, disobedience, rebellion, impotency, and universal alienation from God,[5] is beyond all contradiction (by testimonies plentifully given out, here a little and there a little, line upon line) manifest in the Scripture. Shall we now say that this grace of God is bestowed on men upon the account of these qualifications, and continued without revocation on condition that they abide in the same state, with the same qualifications? Let, then, men continue in sin, that grace may abound!

Is the case any other as to justification? Doth not God justify the ungodly? Rom. iv. 5. Are we not in filthy robes when he comes to clothe us with robes of righteousness? Zech. iii. 3. Are we not reconciled to God when alienated by wicked works? Col. i. 21.

[1] Isa. lxv. 1; Rom. ix. 25; Hos. ii. 23; 1 Pet. ii. 10; Eph. ii. 12. [2] Matt. viii. 22; Rom. vi. 13; Col. ii. 13 [3] Ezek. xvi. 6; Isa. iv. 4; Job xiv. 4; John iii. 6. [4] John i. 5; Eph. v. 8; Col. i. 13; Luke iv. 18. [5] Rom. viii. 6–8, v. 10; Col. i. 21; Gal. iii. 13; John iii. 35.

These are the qualifications on which, it seems, God grafts his gifts and graces, and whose abode in the persons in whom they are is the condition whereon the irrevocableness of those gifts and graces does depend. Who would have thought they had been of such reckoning and esteem with the Lord! And this, considering what is learnedly discoursed elsewhere, may suffice.

As to the other assertion, that God gives his gifts and graces to *qualifications*, not to *persons:* Those qualifications are either gifts of God or not. If not, who made those men in whom they are differ from others? 1 Cor. iv. 7. If they are, on what qualifications were those qualifications bestowed? That God freely bestows on persons, of his own good pleasure, not grafting on qualifications, his gifts and graces, we have testimonies abundantly sufficient to outbalance Mr Goodwin's assertion: Rom. ix. 18, "He hath mercy on whom he will have mercy." He bestows his mercy and the fruits of it, not on this or that qualification, but on whom or what persons he will; and "to them it is given," saith our Saviour, "to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God, but to others it is not given." I see no stock that his gift is grafted on but only the persons of God's good-will, whom he graciously designs to a participation of it.

Truth is, I know not any thing more directly contradictory to the whole discovery of the work of God's grace in the gospel than that which is couched in these assertions of Mr Goodwin; neither is it any thing less or more than that which of old was phrased, "*The giving of grace according to merit*," ascribing the primitive discriminating of persons as to spiritual grace unto self-endeavours, casting to the ground the free, distinguishing good pleasure of God, and that graciousness of every gift of his (I speak as to the first issue of his love, in quickening, renewing, pardoning grace) which eminently consists in this, that he is found of them that seek him not, and hath mercy on whom he will, because so it seemeth good to him.

Not to digress farther, in the discovery of the unsatisfactoriness of this pretence, from the pursuit of the argument in hand: Because God's gifts are not repented of, therefore do men continue, not in the condition wherein they find them, but wherein they place them; and all qualifications in men whatever that are in the least acceptable to God are so far from being stocks whereon God grafts his gifts and graces, that they are plants themselves which he plants in whomsoever he pleaseth. Yea, the tree is made good before it bear any good fruit, and the branch is implanted into the true olive before it receive the sap or juice of any one good qualification. The sum of Mr Goodwin's answer amounts to this: Let men be steadfast in a good condition, and God's gifts shall steadfastly abide with them; if they change, they also shall be revoked;—which is directly opposite to the plain intendment of the place, namely, that the steadfastness of men

depends upon the irrevocableness of God's grace, and not *e contra.* There is not, in his sense, the least intimation in these words of the permanency of any gift or grace of God with any one on whom it is bestowed, for a day, an hour, or a moment; but, notwithstanding this testimony of the Holy Ghost, they may be given one hour, and taken away the next,—they may flourish in a man in the morning, and in the evening be cut down, dried up, and withered. This is not to answer the arguings of men, but positively to deny what God affirms. To conclude: God gives not his gifts to men (I mean those mentioned) because they please him, but because it pleaseth him so to do, Jer. xxxi. 31, 32; he does not take them away because they displease him, but gives them so to abide with them that they shall never displease him to the height of such a provocation; neither are the gifts of God otherwise to be repented of than by taking them from the persons on whom they are bestowed. But this heap being removed, we may proceed.

Furthermore, then, in sundry places doth the Lord propose this for the consolation of his, and to assure them that there shall never be an everlasting separation between him and them; which shall be farther cleared by particular instances. Things or truths proposed for consolation are, of all others, most clearly exalted above exception; without which they were no way suitable (considering the promptness of our unbelieving hearts to rise up against the work of God's grace and mercy) to compass the end for which they are proposed.

Isa. xl. 27–31, "Why sayest thou, O Jacob, and speakest, O Israel, My way is hid from the LORD, and my judgment is passed over from my God? Hast thou not known? hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the LORD, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? there is no searching of his understanding. He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might he increaseth strength. Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall: but they that wait upon the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; they shall walk, and not faint." Verse 27, Jacob and Israel make a double complaint, both parts of it manifesting some fear or dread of separation from God; for though in general it could not be so, yet in particular believers under temptation may question their own condition, with their right unto and interest in all the things whereby their state and glory is safeguarded. "My way," say they, "is hid from the LORD;"—"The Lord takes no more notice, sets his heart no more upon my way, my walking, but lets me go and pass on as a stranger to him." And farther, "My judgment is passed over from my God;"—"Mine enemies prevail, lusts and corruptions are strong, and God doth not appear in my behalf; judgment is not executed on

them, and what will be the issue of this my sad estate?" What the Lord proposeth and holdeth out unto them, for their establishment in this condition, and to assure them that what they feared should not come upon them, he ushers in by an effectual expostulation: Verse 28, "Hast thou not known?"—"Hast thou not found it true by experience?" "Hast thou not heard?"—"Hast not thou been taught it by the saints that went before thee?" What it is he would have them take notice of, and which he so pathetically insinuates into their understandings and affections, for their establishment, is an exurgency of that description of himself which he gives, verse 28: from his *eternity*,—He is "the everlasting God;" from his *power*,—He is "the Creator of the ends of the earth;" from his *unchangeableness*,—"He fainteth not," he waxeth not weary, and therefore there is no reason he should relinquish or give over any design that he hath undertaken, especially considering that he lays all his purposes in that whereby he describes himself in the last place, even his *wisdom*,—"There is no end of his understanding." He establisheth, I say, their faith upon this fourfold description of himself, or revelation of these four attributes of his nature, as engaged for the effecting of that which he encourageth them to expect. "Who is it, O Jacob, with whom thou hast to do, that thou shouldst fear or complain that thou art rejected? He is eternal, almighty, unchangeable, infinitely wise; and if he be engaged in any way of doing thee good, who can turn him aside, that he should not accomplish all his pleasure towards thee? He will work; who shall let him?" It must be either want of wisdom and foresight to lay a design, or want of power to execute it, that exposeth any one to variableness in any undertaking. Therefore, that they may see how unlikely, how impossible a thing it is that "their way should be hid from the LORD," and "their judgment passed over from their God," he acquaints them who and what he is who hath undertaken to the contrary. But, alas! they are poor, faint creatures: they have no might, no strength to walk with God; unstable as water, they cannot excel; it is impossible they should hold out in the way wherein they are engaged unto the end. To obviate or remove such fears and misgiving thoughts, he lets them know, verse 29, that though they have, or may have, many decays (for they often faint, they often fail, whereof we have examples and complaints in the Scripture, made lively by our own experience), yet from him they shall have supplies to preserve them from that which they fear. He is eternal, almighty, unchangeable, and infinitely wise; he will give out power and increase strength when they faint and in themselves have no might at all. The Lord doth not propose himself under all these considerations to let them know what he is in himself only, but also that he will exert (and act suitably to) these properties in dealing with them, and

making out supplies unto them, notwithstanding all their misgiving thoughts, which arise from the consideration of their own faintings and total want of might. Though in themselves they are weak and faint, yet their springs are in him, and their supplies from him, who is such as he hath here described himself to be. Hereupon, also, he anticipates an objection, by way of concession: Verse 30, "Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall." Men that seem to have a great stock of strength and ability may yet fail and perish utterly;—an objection which, as I formerly observed, these days have given great force unto. We see many who seem to have the vigour of youth and the strength of young men in the ways of God, that have fainted in their course and utterly failed; they began to run well, but lay down almost at the entrance. "And be it so," saith the Lord; "it shall so come to pass indeed. Many that go out in their own strength shall so fall and come to nothing: but what is that to thee, O Jacob, my chosen, thou that waitest upon the Lord? The unchangeable God will so make out strength to thee, that thou shalt never utterly faint, nor give over, but abide flying, running, walking, with speed, strength, and steadfastness, unto the end," verse 31. That expression, "They that wait upon the LORD," is a *description* of the persons to whom the promise is made, and not a *condition* of the promise itself. It is not, "If they wait upon the LORD," but "They that wait upon the LORD." If it were a condition of this promise, there were nothing promised; it is only said, "If they wait on the LORD, they shall wait on the LORD." But of the vanity of such conditionals I shall speak afterward.

A scripture of the like importance you have, Isa. xliv. 1–8, "Yet now hear, O Jacob my servant; and Israel, whom I have chosen: Thus saith the LORD that made thee, and formed thee from the womb, which will help thee; Fear not, O Jacob, my servant; and thou, Jesurun, whom I have chosen. For I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground: I will pour my Spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine offspring: and they shall spring up as among the grass, as willows by the water-courses. One shall say, I am the LORD's; and another shall call himself by the name of Jacob; and another shall subscribe with his hand unto the LORD, and surname himself by the name of Israel. Thus saith the LORD the King of Israel, and his Redeemer the LORD of hosts; I am the first, and I am the last; and beside me there is no God," etc. I shall not need to insist long on the opening of these words: the general design of them is to give consolation and assurance unto Israel, from the eternity, unchangeableness, and absoluteness of God, with some peculiar references to the second person, the Redeemer, who is described, Rev. i. 8, with the titles, for the substance of them, whereby the LORD here holds out his own excellency.

I shall only observe some few things from the words, for the illustration of the truth we have in hand, contained in them.

The state and condition wherein Jacob, Israel, Jesurun (several titles upon several accounts given to believers), are described to be, is twofold:—First, Of *fear* and *disconsolation*, as is intimated in the redoubled prohibition of that frame in them: Verse 2, "Fear not;" and verse 8, "Fear ye not, neither be afraid." Some temptation to farther distance or separation from God (the only thing to be feared) was fallen upon them. This they are frequently exercised withal; it is the greatest and most pressing temptation whereunto they are liable and exposed. To conclude because some believers in *hypothesi* may, under temptation, fear their own separation from God, therefore believers in *thesi* may be forsaken, yea, that unless this be true the other could not befall them, may pass for the arguing of men who are unacquainted with that variety of temptations, spiritual motions and commotions, which believers are exercised withal. This, I say, is the first part of that state wherein they are supposed to be; a condition of the greatest difficulty in the world for the receiving of satisfaction. Secondly, Of *barrenness, unprofitableness*, and *withering;* which seems, and that justly, to be the cause of their fear: Verse 3, they are as the "thirsty," and as the "dry ground," parched in itself, fruitless to its owners, withering in their own souls, and bringing forth no fruit to God. A sad condition on both hands. Within they find decays, they find no active principles of bringing forth fruit unto God; and without desertion, fears at least that they are forsaken. Upon this ye have the foundation that the Lord lays for the refreshment of their spirits in this condition, and reducing of them into an established assurance of the continuance of his love; and that is his free, gracious election and choosing of them: "Thou art Jacob whom I have chosen, Jesurun whom I have chosen," verses 1, 2, even from eternity; when he "appointed the ancient people, and the things that are coming and shall come," verse 7; when he purposed mercy for the fathers of old, whom long since he had brought upon that account unto himself.

This is the "foundation" of doing them good, which "standeth sure;" as the apostle makes use of it to the same purpose, 2 Tim. ii. 19. This foundation being laid, Isa. xliv. 3, he gives them a twofold promise, suited to the double state wherein they were:—First, For the removal of their drought and barrenness, he will give them "waters" and "floods" for the taking of it away; which in the following words he interpreteth of the "Spirit," as likewise doth the apostle John, chap. vii. 38, 39. He is the great soul-refresher; in him are all our springs. Saith the Lord, then, "Fear not, ye poor thirsty souls; ye shall have him as a flood, in great abundance, until all his fruits be brought forth in you." Secondly, For the removal of the other

evil, or fears of desertion and casting off, he minds them of his covenant, or the blessing of their offspring, of them and their seed, according to his promise when he undertook to be their God, Gen. xvii. 7. And then, Thirdly, There is a twofold issue of God's thus dealing with them:—*First*, Of *real fruitfulness:* Isa. xliv. 4, "They shall be as grass" under perpetual showers, which cannot possibly wither and decay, or dry away, "and as trees planted by the rivers of water, that bring forth their fruit in their season, whose leaf doth not wither," Ps. i. 3. *Secondly*, Of *zealous profession* and owning of God, with the engagement of their hearts and hands unto him, which you have in Isa. xliv. 5. Every one for himself shall give up himself to the Lord, in the most solemn engagement and professed subjection that is possible. They shall "say," and "subscribe," and "surname" themselves, by names and terms of faith and obedience, to follow the Lord in the faith of Jacob or Israel, in the inheritance of the promises which were made to him.

But now what assurance is there that this happy beginning shall be carried on to perfection, that this kindness of God to them shall abide to the end, and that there shall not be a separation between him and his chosen Israel? In the faith hereof the Lord confirms them by that revelation which he makes of himself and his properties, verses 6–8. First, in his *sovereignty*, he is the "King." What shall obstruct him? hath not he power to dispose of all things? He is the "LORD and King;" he will work, and who shall let him? But hath he kindness and tenderness to carry him out hereunto? Therefore, secondly, he is their "*Redeemer;*" and do but consider what he doth for the glory of that title, and what the work of redemption stood him in, and ye will not fear as to this nor be afraid. And all this he, thirdly, closeth with his *eternity* and *unchangeableness*. He is "the first, and he is the last, and beside him there is no God,"—the first, that chose them from eternity; and the last, that will preserve them to the end; and still the same,—he altereth not. I shall not add more instances in this kind. That the Lord often establisheth his saints in the assurance of the unchangeableness of his love towards them from the immutability of his own nature is very evident. Thence comparing himself and his love with a tender mother and her love, he affirms that hers may be altered, but his shall admit of "no variableness, neither shadow of turning," Isa. xlix. 14–16

To wind up this discourse, the sum of this first part of our first scriptural demonstration of the truth under debate amounts to this argument: That which God affirms shall be certainly and infallibly fulfilled upon the account of the immutability of his own nature, and encourageth men to expect it as certainly to be fulfilled as he is unchangeable; that shall infallibly, notwithstanding all oppositions and difficulties, be wrought and perfected. Now, that such, and so

surely bottomed is the continuance of the love of God unto his saints, and so would he have them to expect, etc., hath been proved by an induction of many particular instances, wherein those engagements from the immutability of God are fully expressed.

One of these testimonies, even that mentioned in the first place, Mal. iii. 6, from whence this argument doth arise, is proposed to be considered and answered by Mr Goodwin, chap. x. sect. 40, 41, pp. 205–207. A brief removal of his exceptions to our inference from hence will leave the whole to its native vigour, and the truth therein contained to its own steadfastness in the hand and power of that demonstration. Thus, then, he proposeth that place of the prophet and our argument from thence, whereunto he shapes his answer: "For the words of Malachi, 'I am the LORD, I change not,' from which it is wont to be argued that when God once loves a person, he never ceaseth to love him, because this must needs argue a changeableness in him in respect of his affection, and consequently the saints cannot fall away finally from his grace," etc. So he.

Ans. It is an easy thing so to frame the argument of an adversary as to contribute more to the weakening of it in its proposing than in the answer afterward given thereunto; and that it is no strange thing with Mr Goodwin to make use of this advantage in his disputations in this book is discerned and complained of by all not engaged in the same contest with himself. That he hath dealt no otherwise with us in the place under consideration, the ensuing observations will clearly manifest:—

First, all the strength that Mr Goodwin will allow to this argument ariseth from a naked consideration of the immutability of God as it is an essential property of his nature, when our arguing is from his engagement to us by and on the account of that property. That God will do such and such a thing because he is omnipotent, though he shall not at all manifest any purpose of his will to lay forth his omnipotency for the accomplishment of it, is an inference all whose strength is vain presumption; but when God hath engaged himself for the performance of any thing, thence to conclude to the certain accomplishment of it, from his power whereby he is able to do it, is a deduction that faith will readily close withal. So the apostle assures us of the re-implanting of the Jews upon this account. "God," saith he, "is able to plant them in again," having promised so to do, Rom. xi. 23. There are two considerations upon which the unchangeableness of God hath a more effectual influence into the continuance of his love to his saints than the mere objected thought of it will lead us to an acquaintance withal:—

First, God *proposeth his immutability* to the faith of the saints for their establishment and consolation, in this very case of the stability of his love unto them. We dare not draw conclusions in re-

ference to ourselves from any property of God, but only upon the account of the revelation which he hath made thereof unto us for that end and purpose; but this being done, we have a sure anchor, firm and steadfast, to fix us against all blasts of temptation or opposition whatsoever. When God proposes his immutability or unchangeableness to assure us of the continuance of his love unto us, if we might truly apprehend, yea, and ought so to do, that his unchangeableness may be preserved, and himself vindicated from the least shadow of turning, though he should change his mind, thoughts, love, purposes, concerning us every day, what conclusion for consolation could possibly arise from such proposal of God's immutability unto us? yea, would it not rather appear to be a way suited to the delusion of poor souls, that when they shall think they have a solid pillar, no less than an essential property of the nature of God, to rest upon, they shall find themselves leaning on a cloud, or shadow, or on a broken reed that will run into their hands, instead of yielding them the least supportment? God deals not thus with his saints. His discoveries of himself in Christ for the establishment of the hearts of his are not such flints as from whence the most skilful and exercised faith cannot expect one drop of consolation. Whatsoever of his name he holds out to the sons of men, it will be a strong tower and place of refuge and safety to them that fly unto it.

Secondly, The consideration of that love in its continuance, wherein the Lord settles and puts out of doubt the souls of his, by the engagement of his unchangeableness, or the calling of them to the consideration of that property in him from whom that love doth flow, adds strength also to the way of arguing we insist upon. Were the love of God to his nothing but the declaration of his approbation of such and such things, annexed to the law and rule of obedience (it might stand firm like a pillar in a river, though the water be not thereby caused to stand still one moment, but only touch it, and so pass on), there were some colour of exception to be laid against it. And this is, indeed, the πρῶτον ψεῦδος of Mr Goodwin in this whole controversy, that he acknowledgeth no other love of God to believers but what lies in the outward approbation of what is good, and men's doing it; upon which account there is no more love in God to one than another, to the choicest saint than to the most profligate villain in the world. Nay, it is not any love at all, properly so called, being no internal, vital act of God's will, the seat of his love, but an external declaration of the issue of our obedience. The declaration of God's will, that he approves faith and obedience, is no more love to Peter than it is to Judas. But let now the love of God to believers be considered as it is in itself, as a vital act of his will, willing, if I may so speak, good things to them, as the immanent purpose of his will, and also joined with an acceptation of them in the effects of his

grace, favour, and love in Jesus Christ, and it will be quickly evidenced how an alteration therein will intrench upon the immutability of God, both as to his essence, and attributes, and decrees.

Having thus re-enforced our argument from this place of Scripture, by restoring unto it those considerations which (being its main strength) it was maimed and deprived of by Mr Goodwin in his proposal thereof, I shall briefly consider the answers that by him are suggested thereunto.

Thus, then, he proceedeth: "By the tenor of this arguing, it will as well follow, that in case God should at any time withdraw his love and his favour from a nation or body of a people which he sometimes favoured or loved, he should be changed. But that no such change of dispensation as this towards one or the same people or nation argueth any change at all in God, at least any such change which he disclaimeth as incompetent to him, is evident from those instances without number recorded in Scripture of such different dispensations of his towards sundry nations, and more especially towards the Jews, to whom sometimes he gives peace, sometimes consumes them with wars, sometimes he makes them the head, and sometimes again the tail of the nations round about them."

Ans. The love and favour of God to a nation or people, here brought into the lists of comparison with the peculiar love of God to his saints, which he secures them of upon the account of his immutability, is either the outward dispensation of good things to them, called his love because it expresseth and holds out a fountain of goodness from whence it flows, or it is an eternal act of God's will towards them, of the same nature with the love to his own formerly described. If it be taken in the first sense, as apparently it is intended, and so made out from the instance of God's dealing with the Jews in outward blessings and punishments, Mr Goodwin doth plainly *μεταβαίνειν εἰς ἄλλο γένος*,—fall into a thing quite of another nature, instead of that which was first proposed. "Amphora cum cœpit institui cur urceus exit?" There is a wide difference between outward providential dispensations and eternal purposes and acts of grace and good-will, to deal in the instance insisted on by Mr Goodwin. There being frequent mention in the Scripture, as afterward shall be fully declared, of a difference and distinction in and of that people (for "they are not all Israel that are of Israel," Rom. ix. 4–8), the whole lump and body of them being the people of God in respect of separation from the rest of the world and dedication to his worship and external profession, yet a remnant only, a hidden remnant, being his people upon the account of eternal designation and actual acceptation into love and favour in Jesus Christ, there must needs be also a twofold dispensation of God and his will in reference to that people,—the first common and general, towards the whole body of them, in outward

ordinances and providential exercises of goodness or justice. In this there was great variety as to the latter part, comprehending only external effects or products of the power of God; in which regard he can pull down what he hath set up, and set up what he hath pulled down, without the least shadow of turning, these various dispensations working uniformly towards the accomplishment of his unchangeable purposes. And this is all that Mr Goodwin's exceptions reach to, even a change in the outward dispensation of providence; which none ever denied, being that which may be, nay is done, for the bringing about and accomplishment, in a way suitable to the advancement of his glory, of his unchangeable purposes. What proportion there is to be argued from between the general effects of various dispensations and that peculiar love and grace of the covenant thereof, wherein God assures his saints of their stability upon the account of his own unchangeableness, I know not. Because he may remove his candlestick from a fruitless, faithless people, and give them up to desolation, may he therefore take his Holy Spirit from them that believe? For whilst that continues, the root of the matter is in them. So that, secondly, there is a peculiar dispensation of grace exerted towards those peculiar ones whom he owneth and receiveth, as above mentioned, wherein there are such engagements of the purposes, decrees, and will of God, as that the stream of them cannot be forced back without as great an alteration and change in God as the thoughts of the heart of the meanest worm in the world are liable unto; and on this the Lord asserts the steadfastness of his love to them in the midst of the changes of outward dispensations towards the body of that people, wherein also their external concernments were wrapped up, 1 Sam. xii. 22. But this will afterward be more fully cleared. The substance of this exception amounts only to thus much: There are changes wrought in the works which outwardly are of God, as to general and common administrations; therefore, also, are his eternal purposes of spiritual grace liable to the like alterations. Whereas Mr Goodwin says that this will not import any alteration in God, at least any such alteration as is incompetent to him, I know not of any shadow of alteration that may be ascribed to him without the greatest and most substantial derogation from his glory that you can engage into.

And this farther clears what is farther excepted to the end of sect. 40, in these words: "Therefore, neither the unchangeableness nor changeableness of God is to be estimated or measured, either by any variety or uniformity of dispensation towards one and the same object; and, consequently, for him to express himself, as this day, towards a person, man or woman, as if he intended to save them, or that he really intended to save them, and should on the morrow, as the alteration in the interim may be, or however may be supposed,

in these persons, express himself to the contrary, as that he verily intends to destroy them, would not argue or imply the least alteration in him."

Ans. It is true, such dispensations of God as are morally declarative of what God approves, or what he rejects,—not engagements of any particular intendment, design, or purpose of his will,—or such as are merely outward acts of his power, may in great variety be subservient to the accomplishment of his purposes, and may undergo (the first in respect of the objects, the latter of the works themselves) many alterations, without prejudice to the immutability of God. The first in themselves are everlastingly unchangeable. God always approves the obedience of his creatures, according to that light and knowledge which he is pleased to communicate unto them, and always condemns and disallows their rebellions; yet the same persons may do sometimes what he approves and sometimes what he condemns, without the least shadow of change in God. Whilst *they* thus change, *his purposes* concerning them, and what he will do to them and for them, are unchangeable as is his law concerning good and evil. For the latter, take an instance in the case of Pharaoh. God purposeth the destruction of Pharaoh, and suits his dispensations in great variety and with many changes for the bringing about and accomplishing of that his unchangeable purpose; he plagues him and frees him, he frees him and plagues him again. All these things do not in the least prove any alteration in God, being all various effects of his power, suited to the accomplishment of an unchangeable purpose. So in respect of persons whom he intends to bring, through Christ, infallibly to himself, how various are his dispensations, both temporal and spiritual! He afflicts them and relieves them, sends them light and darkness, strength and weakness, forsakes and appears to them again, without the least alteration in his thoughts and purposes towards them; all these things, by his infinite wisdom, working together for their good. But now, if by "dispensation" you understand and comprehend also the thoughts and purposes of God towards any for the bringing of them to such and such an end, if these be altered, and the Lord doth change them continually, I know no reason why a poor worm of the earth may not lay an equal claim (*absit blasphemia*) to immutability and unchangeableness with him who asserts it as his essential property and prerogative, whereby he distinguisheth himself from all creatures whatsoever.

There is also an ambiguity in that expression, "That God expresseth himself this day towards a man or woman that he really intends to save them, and on the morrow expresseth himself to the contrary." If our author intend only God's moral approbation of duties and performances, as was said before, with the conditional approbation of persons with respect to them, there being therein no declaration

of any intention or purpose of God properly so called, the instance is not in the least looking towards the business we have in hand. But if withal he intend the purposes and intentions of the will of God, as these terms, "really intend" and "verily intend," do import, I know not what to call or account alteration and change if this be not. Surely if a man like ourselves do really intend one thing one day, and verily intend the clean contrary the next day, we may make bold to think and say he is changeable; and what apology will be found, on such a supposal, for the immutability of God doth not fall within the compass of my narrow apprehension. Neither is that parenthetical expression, of a change imagined in the persons concerning whom God's intentions are, any plea for his changeableness upon this supposal; for he either foresaw that change in them or he did not. If he did not, where is his prescience? yea, where is his deity? If he did, to what end did he really and verily intend and purpose to do so and so for a man, when at the same instant he knew the man would so behave himself as he should never accomplish any such intention towards him? We should be wary how we ascribe such lubricous thoughts to worms of the earth like ourselves; "but if a man sin against the LORD, who shall entreat for him?" If one should really and verily intend or purpose to give a man bread to eat to-morrow, who he knows infallibly will be put to death to-night, such an one will not, perhaps, be counted changeable, but he will scarce escape being esteemed a changeling. Yet it seems it must be granted that God verily and really intends to do so and so for men, if they be in such and such a condition, which he verily and really knows they will not be in! But suppose all this might be granted, what is it at all to the argument in hand concerning the Lord's engaging his immutability to his saints, to secure them from perishing upon the account thereof? Either prove that God doth change, which he saith he doth not, or that the saints may perish though he change not, which he affirms they cannot, or you speak not to the business in hand.

The 41st section contains a discourse too long to be transcribed, unless it were more to the purpose in hand than it is. I shall, therefore, briefly give the reader a taste of some paralogisms that run from one end of it to the other, and then, in particular, roll away every stone that seems to be of any weight for the detaining captive the truth in whose vindication we are engaged:—

First, From the beginning to the ending of the whole discourse the thing in question is immodestly begged, and many inferences made upon a supposal that believers may become impenitent apostates; which, being the sole thing under debate, ought not in itself to be taken as granted, and so made a proof of itself. It is by us asserted that those who are once freely accepted of God in Christ shall not be so forsaken as to become impenitent apostates, and that upon the account

of the immutability of God, which he hath engaged to give assurance thereof. To evince the falsity of this, it is much pressed that if they become impenitent apostates, God, without the least shadow of mutability, may cast them off and condemn them; which is a kind of reasoning that will scarce conclude to the understanding of an intelligent reader. And yet this sandy foundation is thought sufficient to bear up many rhetorical expressions concerning the changeableness of God, in respect of sundry of his attributes, if he should not destroy such impenitent apostates as it is splendidly supposed believers may be. "O famâ ingens, ingentior armis vir Trojane." This way of disputing will scarce succeed you in this great undertaking.

The second scene of this discourse is a gross confounding of God's legal or moral approbation of duties, and conditional [approbation] of persons in reference to them (which is not love properly so called, but a mere declaration of God's approving the thing which he commands and requires), with the will of God's purpose and intention, and actual acceptation of the persons of believers in Jesus Christ, suited thereunto. Hence are all the comparisons used between God and a judge in his love, and the express denial that God's love is fixed on any *materially*,—that is, on the persons of any, for that is the intendment of it,—but only *formally*, in reference to their qualifications. Hence, also, is that instance again and again insisted on, in this and the former section, of the love of God to the fallen angels whilst they stood in their obedience. Their obedience, no doubt (if any they actually yielded), fell under the approbation of God; but that it was the purpose and intention of God to continue and preserve them in that obedience cannot be asserted without ascribing to him more palpable mutability than can fall upon a wise and knowing man.

Thirdly, The discourse of this section hath a contribution of strength, such as it is, from a squaring of the love of God unto the sweet nature and loving disposition of men; which is perhaps no less gross anthropomorphitism than they were guilty of who assigned him a body and countenance like to ours.

And upon these three stilts, whereof the first is called "Petitio Principii," the second "Ignoratio Elenchi," and the third "Fallacia non causæ pro causa," is this discourse advanced.

I shall not need to transcribe and follow the progress of this argumentation; the observation of the fallacies before mentioned will help the meanest capacity to unravel the sophistry of the whole. The close only of it may seem to deserve more particular consideration. So, then, it proceedeth: "The unchangeableness assumed by God himself unto himself in the work in hand, 'I am the LORD, I change not,' is, I conceive, that which is found in him in respect of his decrees; the reason is, because it is assigned by him as the rea-

son why they were not utterly destroyed: 'I am the LORD, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed.' In the beginning of the chapter he did declare unto them his purpose and decree of sending his only-begotten Son, whom he there calls 'The messenger of the covenant,' unto them. He predicteth, verses 3, 4, the happy fruit or consequence of that his sending, in reference to their nation and posterity. To the unchangeableness of this his decree he assigns the patience which he had for a long time exercised towards them under their great and continued provocations; whereby he implies, that if he could have been turned out of the way of his decree concerning the sending of his Son unto them in their posterity, they would have done it by the greatness of their sins. But insomuch as this his decree, or himself in this his decree, was unchangeable, and it must have been changed in case they had been all destroyed, for the decree was for the sending to their nation and posterity, 'hence,' saith he, 'it comes to pass, that though your sins otherwise abundantly have deserved it, yet I have spared you from a total ruin.' Therefore, in these two last Scripture arguments, there is every whit as much, or rather more, against than for the common doctrine of perseverance."

Ans. That the unchangeableness of God, which is mentioned in this text, hath relation to the decrees of God is granted; whatever, then, God purposeth or decreeth is put upon a certainty of accomplishment upon the account of his unchangeableness. There may be some use hereafter made of this concession, when, I suppose, the evasions that will be used about the objects of those decrees and their conditionality will scarce waive the force of our arguing from it. For the present, though I willingly embrace the assertion, yet I cannot assent to the analysis of that place of Scripture which is introduced as the reason of it. The design of the Lord in that place hath been before considered. That the consolation here intended is only this, that whereas God purposed to send the Lord Christ to the nation of the Jews, which he would certainly fulfil and accomplish, and therefore did not, nor could, utterly destroy them, will scarcely be evinced to the judgment of any one who shall consider the business in hand with so much liberty of spirit as to cast an eye upon the Scripture itself. That after the rehearsal of the great promise of sending his Son in the flesh to that people, he distinguisheth them into his chosen ones and those rejected, his remnant and the refuse of the nation, being the main body thereof, threatening destruction to the latter, but engaging himself into a way of mercy and love towards the former, hath been declared. To assure the last of his continuance in these thoughts and purposes of his good-will towards them, he minds them of his unchangeableness in all such purposes, and particularly encourages them to rest upon it in respect of his love towards themselves. That God intended to administer con-

solation to his saints in the expression insisted on is not, cannot be, denied. Now, what consolation could redound to them in particular from hence, that the whole nation should not utterly be rooted out, because God purposed to send his Son to their posterity? Notwithstanding this, any individual person that shall flee to the horns of this altar for refuge, that shall lay hold on this promise for succour, may perish everlastingly. There is scarce any place of Scripture where there is a more evident distinction asserted between the Jews who were so outwardly only and in the flesh, and those who were so inwardly also and in the circumcision of the heart, than in this and the following chapter. Their several portions are also clearly proportioned out to them in sundry particulars. Even this promise of sending the Messiah respected not the whole nation, and doubtless was only subservient to the consolation of them whose blessedness consisted in being distinguished from others. But let the context be viewed, and the determination left to the Spirit of truth in the heart of him that reads.

Neither doth it appear to me how the decree of God concerning the sending of his Son into the world can be asserted as absolutely immutable upon that principle formerly laid down and insisted on by our author. He sends him into the world to die, neither is any concernment of his mediation so often affirmed to fall under the will and purpose of God as his death. But concerning this Mr Goodwin disputes, out of Socinus,[1] for a possibility of a contrary event, and that the whole counsel of God might have been fulfilled by the goodwill and intention of Christ, though actually he had not died. If, then, the purpose of God concerning Christ, as to that great and eminent part of his intendment therein, might have been frustrated and was liable to alteration, what reason can be rendered wherefore that might not upon some considerations (which Mr Goodwin is able, if need were, to invent) have been the issue of the whole decree? And what, then, becomes of the collateral consolation, which from the immutability of that decree is here asserted? Now, this being the only witness and testimony, in the first part of our scriptural demonstration of the truth in hand, whereunto any exception is put in, and the exceptions against it being in such a frame and composure as manifest the whole to be a combination of beggars and jugglers, whose pleas are inconsistent with themselves, as it doth now appear, upon the examination of them apart, it is evident that as Mr Goodwin hath little ground or encouragement for that conclusion he makes of this section, so the light breaking forth from a constellation of this and other texts mentioned is sufficient to lead us into an acknowledgment and embracement of the truth contended for.

[1] Socin. Præl. Theol. cap. x. sect. 8.

CHAPTER III.

THE IMMUTABILITY OF THE PURPOSES OF GOD.

The immutability of the purposes of God proposed for a second demonstration of the truth in hand—Somewhat of the nature and properties of the purposes of God: the object of them—Purposes, how acts of God's understanding and will—The only foundation of the futurition of all things—The purposes of God absolute—Continuance of divine love towards believers purposed—Purposes of God farther considered and their nature explained—Their independence and absoluteness evinced—Proved from Isa. xlvi. 9–11; Ps. xxxiii. 9–11; Heb. vi. 17, 18, etc.—These places explained—The same truth by sundry reasons and arguments farther confirmed—Purpose in God of the continuance of his love and favour to believers manifested by an induction of instances out of Scripture; the first from Rom. viii. 28 proposed, and farther cleared and improved—Mr G.'s dealing with our argument from hence and our exposition of this place considered—His exposition of that place proposed and discussed—The design of the apostle commented on—The fountain of the accomplishment of the good things mentioned omitted by Mr G.—In what sense God intends to make all things work together for good to them that love him—Of God's foreknowledge—Of the sense and use of the word προγινώσκω, also of *scisco*, and γινώσκω in classical authors—Πρόγνωσις in Scripture everywhere taken for foreknowledge or predetermination, nowhere for pre-approbation—Of pre-approving or pre-approbation here insisted on by Mr G.—Its inconsistency with the sense of the apostle's discourse manifested—The progress of Mr G.'s exposition of this place considered—Whether men love God antecedently to his predestination and their effectual calling—To pre-ordain and pre-ordinate different—No assurance granted of the consolation professed to be intended—The great uncertainty of the dependence of the acts of God's grace mentioned on one another—The efficacy of every one of them resolved finally into the wills of men—Whether calling according to God's purpose supposeth a saving answer given to that call—The affirmative proved, and exceptions given thereto removed—What obstructions persons called may lay in their own way to justification—The iniquity of imposing conditions and supposals on the purposes of God not in the least intimated by himself—The whole acknowledged design of the apostle everted by the interposition of cases and conditions by Mr G.—Mr G.'s first attempt to prove the decrees of God to be conditional considered—1 Sam. ii. 30 to that end produced—1 Sam. ii. 30 farther considered, and its unsuitableness to illustrate Rom. viii. 28–31 proved—Interpretation of Scripture by comparing of places agreeing neither in design, word, nor matter, rejected—The places insisted on proved not to be parallel by sundry particular instances—Some observations from the words rejected—What act of God intended in these words to Eli, "I said indeed"—No purpose or decree of God in them declared—Any such purpose as to the house of Eli by sundry arguments disproved—No purpose of God in the words insisted on farther manifested—They are expressive of the promise or law concerning the priesthood, Num. xxv. 11–13, more especially relating unto Exod. xxviii. 43, xxix. 9—The import of that promise, law, or statute, cleared—The example of Jonah's preaching, and God's commands to Abraham and Pharaoh—The universal disproportion between the texts compared by Mr G., both as to matter and expression, farther manifested—Instances or cases of Saul and Paul to prove conditional purposes in God considered—Conditional purposes

argued from conditional threatenings—The weakness of that argument—The nature of divine threatenings—What will of God, or what of the will of God, is declared by them—No proportion between eternal purposes and temporal threatenings—The issue of the vindication of our argument from the foregoing exceptions—Mr G.'s endeavour to maintain his exposition of the place under consideration—The text perverted—Several evasions of Mr G. from the force of this argument considered—His arguments to prove no certain or infallible connection between calling, justification, and glorification, weighed and answered—His first, from the scope of the chapter and the use of exhortations—The question begged—His second, from examples of persons called and not justified—The question argued begged—No proof insisted on but the interposition of his own hypothesis—How we are called irresistibly, and in what sense—Whether bars of wickedness and unbelief may be laid in the way of God's effectual call—Mr G.'s demur to another consideration of the text removed—The argument in hand freed from other objections and concluded—Jer. xxxi. 3 explained and improved, for the confirmation of the truth under demonstration—2 Tim. ii. 19 opened, and the truth from thence confirmed—The foregoing exposition and argument vindicated and confirmed—The same matter at large pursued—John vi. 37–40 explained, and the argument in hand from thence confirmed—Mr G.'s exceptions to our arguing from this place removed—The same matter farther pursued—The exposition and argument insisted on fully vindicated and established—Matt. xxiv. 24 opened and improved—The severals of that text more particularly handled—Farther observations, for the clearing the mind of the Holy Ghost in this place—The same farther insisted on and vindicated—Mr G.'s exceptions at large discussed and removed—Eph. i. 3–5, 2 Thess. ii. 13, 14, opened—The close of the second argument, from the immutability of the purposes of God.

HAVING cleared the truth in hand, from the *immutability of the nature of God*, which himself holds out as engaged for us to rest upon, as to the unchangeable continuance of his love unto us, proceed we now to consider the steadfastness and *immutability of his purposes*, which he frequently asserts as another ground of assurance to the saints of his safeguarding their glory of free acceptation to the end.

I shall not enter upon the consideration of the nature and absoluteness of the purposes of God as to an express handling of them, but only a little unfold that property and concernment of them whereon the strength of the inference we aim at doth in the same measure depend. Many needless and curious questions have been, by the serpentine wits of men, moved and agitated concerning them; wherein, perhaps, our author hath not been outgone by many; as will be judged by those who have weighed his discourses concerning them, with his distinctions of "desires, intentions, purposes, and decrees," in God. But this is not the business we have in hand; for what concerneth that, that which ensueth may suffice. God himself being an infinite pure act, those acts of his will and wisdom which are eternal and immanent are not distinguished from his nature and being but only in respect of the reference and habitude which they

bear unto some things to be produced outwardly from him. The objects of them all are such things as might not be. God's purposes are not concerning any thing that is in itself absolutely necessary. He doth not purpose that he will be wise, holy, infinitely good, just: all these things, that are of absolute necessity, come not within the compass of his purposes. Of things that might not be are his decrees and intentions; they are of all the products of his power,—all that outwardly he hath done, doth, or will do, to eternity. All these things, to the falling of a hair or the withering of a [blade of] grass, hath he determined from of old. Now, this divine fore-appointment of all things the Scripture assigns sometimes to the knowledge and understanding, sometimes to the will of God: "Known unto him are all his works from the beginning of the world," Acts xv. 18. It is that knowledge which hath an influence into that most infinitely wise disposal of them which is there intimated. And the determination of things to be done is referred to the "counsel" of God Acts iv. 28; which denotes an act of his wisdom and understanding, and yet withal it is the "counsel of his own will," Eph. i. 11.[1]

I know that all things originally owe their *futurition* to a free act of the will of God; he doth whatever he will and pleaseth. Their relation thereunto translates them out of that state of possibility, and [from] being objects of God's absolute omnipotency and infinite *simple intelligence* or understanding, whereby he intuitively beholdeth all things that might be produced by the exerting of his infinite almighty power, into a state of futurition, making them objects of God's foreknowledge, or *science of vision*, as it is called.[2] But yet the Scripture expresseth (as before) that act of God whereby he determines the beings, issues, and orders of things, [so as] to manifest the concurrence of his infinite wisdom and understanding in all his purposes. Farther; as to the way of expressing these things to our manner of apprehension, there are held out intentions and purposes of God distinctly suited to all beings, operations, and events; yet in God himself they are not multiplied. As all things are present to him in one most simple and single act of his understanding, so with one individual act of his will he determines concerning all. But yet, in reference to the things that are disposed of, we may call them the purposes of God. And these are the eternal springs of God's actual providence; which being ("ratio ordinis ad finem") the disposing of all things to their ends in an appointed manner and order, in exact correspondence unto them, these purposes themselves must be the infinitely wise, eternal, immanent acts of his will, appointing and determining all things, beings, and operations, kinds of beings, manners

[1] Matt. vi. 28–30; Luke xii. 6, 7; John iv. 4–8.

[2] Isa. xiv. 24, xix. 12, xxiii. 9; Jer. li. 29; Rom. viii. 28, ix. 11, 19; Ps. cxxxix. 11, 12; Isa. xl. 28; Heb. iv. 13.

of operation, free, necessary, contingent, as to their existence and event, into an immediate tendency unto the exaltation of his glory; or, as the apostle calls them, the "counsel of his own will," according whereunto he effectually worketh all things, Eph. i. 11.

Our consideration of these purposes of God being only in reference to the business which we have in hand, I shall do these two things:—First, Manifest that they are all of them *absolute* and *immutable;* wherein I shall be brief, not going out to the compass of the controversy thereabout, as I intimated before; my intendment lies another way. Secondly, Show that God hath purposed *the continuance of his love* to his saints, to bring them infallibly to himself, and that this purpose of God, in particular, is unchangeable; which is the second part of the foundation of our abiding with God in the grace of acceptation.

I. By the purposes of God I mean, as I said before, the eternal acts of his will concerning all things that outwardly are of him; which are the rules, if I may so speak, of all his following operations,—all external, temporary products of his power universally answering those internal acts of his will. The judgment of those who make these decrees or purposes of God (for I shall constantly use these words promiscuously, as being purely of the same import, as relating unto God) to be in themselves essential to him and his very nature, or understanding and will, may be safely closed withal. They are in God, as was said, but one; there is not a real multiplication of any thing but subsistence in the Deity. To us these lie under a double consideration:—First, Simply as they are in God; and so it is impossible they should be differenced from his *infinite wisdom and will*, whereby he determineth of any thing. Secondly, In respect of the *habitude* and relation which they bear to the things determined, which the wisdom and will of God might not have had. In the first sense, as was said, they can be nothing but the very nature of God, the τὸ *velle* of God, his internal willing of any thing that is either created or uncreated; for these terms distribute the whole nature of beings. Created they are not, for they are eternal (that no new immanent act can possibly be ascribed to God hath full well of late been demonstrated). Farther; if they are created, then God willed that they should be created, for he created only what he willed. If so, was he willing they should be created, or no? If he were, then a progress will be given infinitely, for the question will arise up to eternity. If uncreated, then doubtless they are God himself, for he only is so; it is impossible that a creature should be uncreated. Again; God's very willing of things is the cause of all things, and therefore must needs be omnipotent and God himself. That "voluntas Dei" is "causa rerum" is taken for granted, and may be proved from Ps. cxv. 3, which the apostle ascribes omnipotency unto,

Rom. ix. 19, "Who hath resisted his will?" Doubtless it is the property of God alone to be the cause of all things, and to be almighty in his so being. But hereof at present no more. On this supposal, the immutability of the decrees of God would plainly be coincident with the immutability of his nature, before handled.

It is, then, of the decrees and purposes of God, with respect to the matters about which they are, whereof I speak: in which regard, also, they are absolute and immutable;—not that they work any essential change in the things themselves concerning which they are, making that to be immutable from thence which in its own nature is mutable; but only that themselves, as acts of the infinite wisdom and will of God, are not liable to nor suspended on any condition whatever foreign to themselves, nor subject to change or alteration (whence floweth an infallible certainty of actual accomplishment in reference to the things decreed or purposed, be their own nature what it will, or their next causes in themselves never so undetermined to their production), whereof I treat. That the determining purposes or decrees of God's will concerning any thing or things by him to be done or effected do not depend, as to their accomplishment, on any conditions that may be supposed in or about the things themselves whereof they are, and therefore are unchangeable, and shall certainly be brought forth unto the appointed issue, is that which we are to prove. Knowing for whose sakes[1] and for what end this labour was undertaken, I shall choose to lay the whole proof of this assertion upon plain texts of Scripture, rather than mix my discourse with any such philosophical reasonings as are of little use to the most of them whose benefit is hereby intended.

Isa. xlvi. 9–11, The Holy Ghost speaks expressly to our purpose: "Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure: calling a ravenous bird from the east, the man that executeth my counsel from a far country: yea, I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed it, I will also do it." Verse 9, the Lord asserts his own deity and eternal being, in opposition to all false gods and idols, whom he threatens to destroy, verse 1. Of this he gives them a threefold demonstration:—

First, From his *prescience* or *foreknowledge:* "There is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done;"—"In this am I infinitely discriminated from all the pretended deities of the nations. All things from the beginning to the end are naked before me, and I have declared them by my prophets, even things that are future and contingent in

[1] Matt. xi. 25; 1 Cor. i. 26–28; James ii. 5; 2 Tim. ii. 10.

themselves. So are the things that I now speak of. The destruction of Babylon by the Medes and Persians is a thing to be carried on through innumerable contingencies; and yet as I have seen it so have I told it, and my counsel concerning it shall certainly be executed."

Secondly, By his *power*, in using what instruments he pleaseth for the executing of his purposes and bringing about his own designs: "Calling a ravenous bird from the east;"—one that at first, when he went against Babylon, thought of nothing less than executing the counsel of God, but was wholly bent upon satisfying his own rapine and ambition, not knowing then in the least by whom he was anointed and sanctified for the accomplishment of his will. All the thoughts of his heart, all his consultations and actions, all his progresses and diversions, his success in his great and dreadful undertaking, to break in pieces that "hammer of the whole earth," with all the free deliberations and contingencies wherewith his long war was attended, which were as many, strong, and various, as the nature of things is capable to receive, were not only in every individual act, with its minutest circumstances, by him foreseen, and much also foretold, but also managed in the hand of his power in a regular subservience to that call which he so gave that "ravenous bird" for the accomplishment of his purpose and pleasure.[1]

Thirdly, By the *immutability of his purposes*, which can never be frustrated nor altered: "My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure;—I have purposed it, and I will also do it." The standing, or fixedness and unchangeableness, of his counsel, he manifests by the accomplishment of the things which therein he had determined; neither is there any salve for his immutability in his counsel, should it otherwise fall out. And if we may take his own testimony of himself, what he purposeth, that he doth; and in the actual fulfilling and the bringing about of things themselves purposed, and as purposed, without any possibility of diversion from the real end intended, is their stability and unchangeableness in them manifested. An imaginary immutability in God's purposes, which may consist and be preserved under their utter frustration as to the fulfilling of the things themselves under which they are, the Scripture knows not, neither can reason conceive. Now, this unchangeableness of his purposes the Lord brings as one demonstration of his deity; and those who make them liable to alteration, upon any account or supposition whatsoever, do depress him, what in them lies, into the number of such dung-hill gods as he threatens to famish and destroy.

Ps. xxxiii. 9–11, "He spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast. The LORD bringeth the counsel of the heathen to nought: he maketh the devices of the people of none effect. The counsel of the LORD standeth for ever, the thoughts of his heart to all

[1] Jer. l. li.; Isa. xliv. 25–28.

generations." The production and establishment of all things in that order wherein they are, are by the psalmist ascribed to the will and power of God. By his word and command they not only are, but stand fast; being fixed in that order by him appointed. Both the making, fixing, and sustaining of all things, is by "the word of his power." As the first relates to their being, which they have from creation, so the other to the order in subsistence and operation, which relates to his actual providence. Herein they stand fast. Themselves, with their several and respective relations, dependencies, influences, circumstances, suited to that nature and being which was bestowed on them by his word in their creation, are settled in an exact correspondency to his purposes (of which afterward), not to be shaken or removed.[1] Men have their devices and counsels also, they are free agents, and work by counsel and advice; and therefore God hath not set all things so fast as to overturn and overbear them in their imaginations and undertakings. Saith the psalmist, "They imagine and devise indeed, but their counsel is of nought, and their devices are of none effect; but the counsel of the LORD," etc. The counsel and purposes of the Lord are set in opposition to the counsel and purposes of men, as to alteration, change, and frustration, in respect of the actual accomplishment of the things about which they are. "Their counsels are so and so; but the counsel of the LORD shall stand." He that shall cast verse 11 into verse 10, and say, "The counsel of the LORD, that comes to nought, and the thoughts of his heart are of none effect," let him make what pretences he will or flourishes that he can, or display what supposals and conditions he pleaseth, he will scarcely be able to keep the field against him who will contend with him about His prerogative and glory. And this antithesis between the counsels of men and the purposes of God upon the account of unchangeableness is again confirmed, Prov. xix. 21, "There are many devices in a man's heart; nevertheless the counsel of the LORD, that shall stand." Herein is the difference between the devices of men and the counsel of God: Men have many devices to try what they can do. If one way take not, they will attempt another ("hac non successit, alia aggrediemur via"), and are always disappointed, but only in that wherein they fall in with the will of God. The shallowness of their understanding, the shortness of their foresight, the weakness of their power, the changeableness of their minds, the uncertainty of all the means they use, puts them upon many devices, and often to no purpose.[2] But for Him who is infinite in wisdom and power, to whom all things are present, and to whom nothing can fall out unexpected, yea, what he hath not himself determined, unto whom all emergencies are but the issue of his

[1] Heb. i. 3; Rev. iv. 11; Acts xvii. 28, ii. 23, iv. 28; Gen. l. 20; Eccles. iii. 11.
[2] Isa. viii. 9, 10; Job viii. 9, xi. 12; Eccles. viii. 7, ix. 12.

own good pleasure, who proportions out what efficacy he pleaseth unto the means he useth,—his counsels, his purposes, his decrees shall stand, being, as Job[1] tells us, "as mountains of brass." By this he differenceth himself from all others, idols and men; as also by his certain foreknowledge of what shall come to pass and be accomplished upon those purposes of his.[2] Hence the apostle, Heb. vi. 17, 18, acquaints us that his promise and his oath, those "two immutable things," do but declare ἀμεταθέτου τῆς βουλῆς, "the unchangeableness of his counsel;" which God is abundantly willing to manifest, though men are abundantly unwilling to receive it. Job determines this business in chap. xxiii. 13, 14, "He is of one mind, and who can turn him? what his soul desireth, even that he doeth. For he performeth the thing that is appointed for me." Desires are the least and faintest kind of purposes, in Mr Goodwin's distinctions; yet the certain accomplishment of them, as they are ascribed unto God, is here asserted by the Holy Ghost.

Were the confirmation of the matter of our present discourse my only design in hand, I could farther confirm it by enlarging these ensuing reasons:—

First, From *the immutability of God*, the least questioning whereof falls foul on all the perfections of the divine nature, which require a correspondent affection of all the internal and eternal acts of his mind and will.

Secondly, From *his sovereignty*, in making and executing all his purposes, which will not admit of any such mixture of consults or co-operations of others as should render his thoughts liable to alteration, Rom. xi. 33–36. The Lord in his purposes is considered as the great former of all things, who, having his clay in the hand of his almighty power, ordains every parcel to what kind of vessel and to what use he pleaseth. Hence the apostle concludes the consideration of them, and the distinguishing grace flowing from them, with that admiration, Ὦ βάθος!—"O the depth!" etc.

Thirdly, From their *eternity*, which exempts them from all shadow of change, and lifts them up above all those spheres that either from within and in their own nature, or from without by the impression of others, are exposed to turning. That which is eternal is also immutable, Acts xv. 18; 1 Cor. ii. 7–11.

Fourthly, From the *absoluteness* and *independency of his will*, whereof they are the acts and emanations, Rom. ix. 15–21. Whatever hath any influence upon that, so as to move it, cause it, change it, must be before it, above it, better than it, as every cause is than its effect as such. This will of his, as was said, is the fountain of all being; to which free and independent act all creatures owe their being and subsistence, their operations and manner thereof, their whole differ-

[1] Zechariah? Zech. vi. 1.—Ed. [2] Isa. xliv. 7, xlvi. 10.

ence from those worlds of beings which his power can produce, but which yet shall lie bound up to eternity in their nothingness and possibility, upon the account of his good pleasure. Into this doth our Saviour resolve the disposal of himself, Matt. xxvi. 42, and of all others, chap. xi. 25, 26. Certainly men in their wrangling disputes and contests about it have scarce seriously considered with whom they have to do. "Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus?'

Fifthly, From *the engagement of his omnipotency* for the accomplishment of all his purposes and designs, as is emphatically expressed, Isa. xiv. 24–27, "The LORD of hosts hath sworn, saying, Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand: that I will break the Assyrian in my land. This is the purpose that is purposed upon the whole earth; and this is the hand that is stretched out upon all the nations. For the LORD of hosts hath purposed, and who shall disannul it? and his hand is stretched out, and who shall turn it back?" The Lord doth not only assert the certain accomplishment of all his purposes, but also, to prevent and obviate the unbelief of them who were concerned in their fulfilling, he manifests upon what account it is that they shall certainly be brought to pass; and that is, by the stretching out of his hand, or exalting of his mighty power, for the doing of it; so that if there be a failing therein, it must be through the shortness of that hand of his so stretched out, in that it could not reach the end aimed at. A worm will put forth its strength for the fulfilling of that whereunto it is inclined; and the sons of men will draw out all their power for the compassing of their designs. If there be wisdom in the laying of them, and foresight of emergencies, they alter not, nor turn aside to the right hand or to the left, in the pursuit of them. And shall the infinitely wise, holy, and righteous thoughts and designs of God not have his power engaged for their accomplishment? His infinite wisdom and understanding are at the foundation of them; they are the counsels of his will: Rom. xi. 34, "Who hath known his mind" in them? saith the apostle, "or who hath been his counsellor?" Though no creature can see the paths wherein he walks, nor apprehend the reason of the ways he is delighted in, yet this he lets us know, for the satisfying of our hearts and teaching of our inquiries, that his own infinite wisdom is in them all. I cannot but fear that sometimes men have "darkened counsel by words without knowledge," in curious contests about the decrees and purposes of God, as though they were to be measured by our rule and line, and as though "by searching we could find out the Almighty unto perfection." But he is wise in heart; he that contendeth with him, let him instruct him. Add, that this wisdom in his counsel is attended with infallible prescience of all that can fall in by the way, or in the course of the ac-

complishment of his purposes, and you will quickly see that there can be no possible intervenience, upon the account whereof the Lord should not engage his almighty power for their accomplishment. "He is of one mind, and who can turn him?" "He will work, and who shall let it?"

Sixthly, By demonstrating *the unreasonableness, folly, and impossibility*, of suspending the acts and purposes of the will of God upon any actings of the creatures soever; seeing it cannot be done without subjecting eternity to time, the First Cause to the second, the Creator to the creature, the Lord to the servant, disturbing the whole order of beings and operations in the world.

Seventhly, By the removal of all *possible* or *imaginary* causes of alteration and change, which will all be resolved into impotency in one kind or other; every alteration being confessedly an imperfection, it cannot follow but from want and weakness. Upon the issue of which discourse, if it might be pursued, these corollaries would ensue:—

First, *Conditional* promises and threatenings are not declarative of God's *purposes* concerning persons, but of his *moral approbation* or rejection of things.

Secondly, There is a wide difference between the change of what is *conditionally pronounced* as to the things themselves and the change of what is *determinately willed*, the certainty of whose event is proportioned to the immutable acts of the will of God itself.

Thirdly, That no purpose of God is *conditional*, though *the things themselves*, concerning which his purposes are, are oftentimes conditionals one of another.

Fourthly, That conditional purposes concerning perseverance are either *impossible*, implying contradictions, or *ludicrous*, even to an unfitness for a stage. But of these and such like, as they occasionally fall in, in the ensuing discourse.

II. This foundation being laid, I come to what was secondly proposed,—namely, to manifest, *by an induction of particular instances*, the engagement of these absolute and immutable purposes of God as to the preservation of the saints in his favour to the end; and whatsoever is by Mr Goodwin excepted as to the former doctrine of the decrees and purposes of God, in that part of his treatise which falls under our consideration, shall, in the vindication of the respective places of Scripture to be insisted on, be discussed.

The first particular instance that I shall propose is that eminent place of the apostle, Rom. viii. 28, where you have the truth in hand meted out unto us, full measure, shaken together, and running over. It doth not hang by the side of his discourse, nor is left to be gathered and concluded from other principles and assertions couched therein, but is the main of the apostolical drift and design, it being

proposed by him to make good, upon unquestionable grounds, the assurance he gives believers that "all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose;" the reason whereof he farther adds in the following words: "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first-born among many brethren. Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified." What the good aimed at is, for which all things shall work together, and wherein it doth consist, he manifests in the conclusion of the argument produced to prove his first assertion: Verses 35–39, "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation," etc. The good of believers, of them that love God, consists in the enjoyment of Christ and his love. Saith, then, the apostle, "God will so certainly order all things that they shall be preserved in that enjoyment of it whereunto in this life they are already admitted, and borne out through all oppositions to that perfect fruition thereof which they aim at; and this is so unquestionable, that the very things which seem to lie in the way of such an attainment and event shall work together, through the wisdom and love of God, to that end." To make good this consolation, the apostle lays down two grounds or principles from whence the truth of it doth undeniably follow, the one taken from the description of the persons concerning whom he makes it, and the other from the acts of God's grace, and their respective concatenation in reference to those persons.

The persons, he tells you, are those who are "called according to God's purpose." That their calling here mentioned is the effectual call of God, which is answered by faith and obedience, because it consists in the bestowing of them on the persons so called, taking away the heart of stone and giving a heart of flesh, is not only manifest from that place which afterward [it] receives in the golden chain of divine graces, between predestination and justification, whereby the one hath infallible influences into the other, but also from that previous description which is given of the same persons, namely, that they love God, which certainly is an issue and fruit of effectual calling, as shall afterward be farther argued; for to that issue are things driven in this controversy, that proofs thereof are become needful.

The "purpose" according to which these persons are called is none other than that which the apostle, chap. ix. 11, terms the "purpose of God according to election;" the "election of grace," chap. xi. 5; as also the knowledge and "foundation of God," 2 Tim. ii. 19; as will in the progress of our discourse be made farther appear, although I know not that this is as yet questioned. The immutability of this purpose of God, chap. ix. 11, 12, the apostle demonstrates from its

independency on any thing in them or in respect of them concerning whom it is, it being eternal, and expressly safeguarded against apprehensions that might arise of any causal or occasional influence from any thing in them given thereunto, they lying under this condition alone unto God, as persons that had done neither good nor evil. And this, also, the apostle farther pursues from the sovereignty, absoluteness, and unchangeableness of the will of God. But these things are of another consideration.

Now, this unchangeable purpose and election being the fountain from whence the effectual calling of believers doth flow, the preservation of them to the end designed, the glory whereunto they are chosen, by those acts of grace and love whereby they are prepared thereunto, hath coincidence of infallibility as to the end aimed at with the purpose itself, nor is it liable to the least exception but what may be raised from the mutability and changeableness of God in his purposes and decrees. Hence, in the following verse, upon the account of the stability and immutability of this purpose of God, the utmost and most remote end in reference to the good thereby designed unto believers, though having its present subsistence only in that purpose of God and infallible concatenation of means thereunto conducing, is mentioned as a thing actually accomplished, Rom. viii. 30.

Herein, also, lies the apostle's second eviction of consolation formerly laid down, even in *the indissoluble concatenation of* those acts of grace, love, and favour, whereby the persons of God's purpose, or the "remnant according to the election of grace," shall be infallibly carried on in their present enjoyment and unto the full fruition of the love of Christ. If we may take him upon his word (and he speaks in the name and authority of God), those whom he doth foreknow, or fixes his thoughts peculiarly upon from eternity (for the term *these* is evidently discriminated, and the act must needs be eternal which in order of nature is previous unto predestination, or the appointment to the end by means designed), those, I say, he doth predestinate and appoint, in the immutable purpose of his will, to be conformed unto the image of his Son, as in afflictions, so in grace and glory.

To fancy a suspension of these acts of grace (some whereof are eternal) upon conditionals, and they not intimated in the least in the text, nor consistent with the nature of the things themselves or the end intended, casting the accomplishment and bringing about of the designs of God, proposed as his for our consolation, upon the certain lubricity of the wills of men, and thereupon to propose an intercision of them as to their concatenation and dependence, that they should not have a certain *influence* on the one hand *descending*, nor an unchangeable *dependence* on the other *ascending*, may easily be made to appear to be so plain an opposition to the aim and

design of the apostle as it is possibly capable of. But because these things are really insisted on by Mr Goodwin, I shall choose rather to remove them,—as with much rhetoric, and not without some sophistry, they are by him pressed,—than farther anticipate them, by arguments from the text itself, of their invalidity and nullity.

The discussion of our argument from this place of Scripture he enters upon, chap. x. sect. 42, p. 207, and pursues it, being much entangled with what himself is pleased to draw forth as the strength of it, unto sect. 52, p. 219.

Now, though Mr Goodwin hath not at all mentioned any analysis of the place insisted on, for the making out of the truth we believe to be intended in it, nor ever once showed his reader the face of our argument from hence, but only drawn something of it forth in such divided parcels as he apprehended himself able to blur and obscure, yet to make it evident that he hath not prevailed to foil that part of the strength of truth (his adversary) which he voluntarily chose to grapple withal, I shall consider that whole discourse, and manifest the nullity of his exceptions unto this testimony given in by the apostle to the truth we have in hand.

To obtain his end, Mr Goodwin undertaketh these two things:—first, To give in an exposition of the place of Scripture insisted on, "whence no such conclusion as that which he opposeth," saith he, "can be drawn;" secondly, To give in exceptions to our interpretation of it, and the inferences thereupon by us deduced. The first [is] in these words:—

"For the scope of the apostle, in the sequel of this passage, is clearly this, as the particle 'for' in the beginning of verse 29 plainly showeth, to prove and make good that assertion of his, verse 28, that 'all things work together for good to those that love God.' To prove this he showeth by what method and degrees of dispensations God will bring it to pass. 'Whom he foreknows,' saith he, that is, pre-approves (the word 'knowledge' frequently in Scripture importing approbation), as he must needs do those that love him, 'these he predestinates to be conformed to the image of his Son;' and therefore as all things, even his deepest sufferings, wrought together for good unto him, so must they needs do unto those who are predestinated or pre-ordinated by God to a conformity with him. 'To give you yet,' saith our apostle, 'a farther and more particular account how God, in the secret of his counsels, hath laid things in order to the bringing of them unto an actual conformity with the image of his Son, to wit, in glory, whom he predestinated thereunto (who are such as love him, and thereupon are approved by him), you are to understand that whom he hath so predestinated he hath also called,—that is, hath purposed or decreed to call to the knowledge of his Son or of his gospel,—that is, to afford a more plain and effectual discovery

of him unto them than unto others whom he hath not so predestinated.' By the way, this call doth not necessarily suppose a saving answer given unto it by the called, no whit more than the calling mentioned, Matt. xx. 16, xxii. 14. It only supposeth a real purpose on God's part to make it very sufficient to procure such an answer to it from those that are called. The apostle advanceth towards his proposed end, and addeth, 'Those whom he called, them he also justified;' that is, according to our last exposition of the word 'called,' he hath purposed or decreed to justify,—to wit, in case the called obstruct him not in his way, or by their unbelief render not themselves incapable of justification. The clause following is likewise to be understood with the like proviso as this: 'Whom he hath justified, them he also glorified;' that is, hath purposed or decreed to save, in case they retain the grace of justification, confirmed upon them to the end."

Ans. First, let it be granted that the design of the apostle is to make good that assertion, "All things work together for good to them that love God," and the consolation for believers which thence he holds forth unto them; yet he doth not only show by what method, degrees, or steps, God will bring it to pass, but also, as the fountain of all that ensues, lays down the unalterable purpose of God concerning that end, which is intended in and accomplished by all those steps or degrees of his effectual grace after mentioned. This Mr Goodwin passeth over, as not to be wrested into any tolerable conformity with that sense (if there be any sense in the whole of what he insists upon for the sense of this place) which he intends to rack and press the words unto. To save stumbling at the threshold (which is *malum omen*), he leaps at once over the consideration of this purpose and design of God, as aiming at a certain end, without the least touch upon it. Farther, that God will bring it to pass that all things shall work together for good to them that love him, is not intended by Mr Goodwin as though it should infallibly be so indeed, but only that God will so way-lay them with some advantages that it may be so, as well as otherwise. What consolation believers may receive from this whole discourse of the apostle, intended properly to administer it unto them, as it lies under the gloss ensuing, shall be discovered in our following consideration of it. Thus, then, he makes it out:—

"Whom he foreknows, that is, pre-approves (the word 'knowledge' in Scripture frequently importing approbation), as he must needs do those that love him, them he predestinates."

Ans. First, That to "know" is sometimes taken in Scripture for to *approve* may be granted; but that the word here used must therefore signify to *pre-approve* is an assertion which I dare not pretend to so much foreknowledge as to think that any one besides

himself will approve. Mr Goodwin, I doubt not, knows full well that prepositions in Greek composition do often restrain simple verbs, formerly at liberty for other uses, to one precise signification. The word προγινώσκω, in its constant sense in other authors, is "præscio" or "prædecerno;" γινώσκω itself, "to determine or decree;" so is "scisco" among the Latins, the ancient word "to know." So he in Plautus: "Rogitationes plurimas propter vos populus scivit, quas vos rogatas rumpitis."[1] And nothing more frequent in Cicero, "Quæ scisceret plebs. aut quæ populus juberet," etc.; and again, "Quod multa perniciose, multa pestifere sciscuntur in populus;" and, "Plancus primus legem scivit de publicanis."[2] In like manner is γινώσκω frequently used: Ἔγνωσαν τοῦτο μὴ ποιεῖν—"They determined not to do that thing."[3] Ἀδικα ἔγνωκε περὶ ἐμοῦ ὁ Ζεύς, says he in Lucian; —"He hath determined unrighteous things against me."[4] Hence γνώμη is often taken for a decree, or an established purpose, as Budæus manifesteth out of Plutarch. In Scripture the word is sundry times used, and still in the sense before mentioned; sometimes for a simple foreknowledge. So Paul uses it of the Jews who knew him before his conversion: Acts xxvi. 5, Προγινώσκοντές με ἄνωθεν. It relates not to what they foreknew, but what they knew before, or in former days. And as the simple verb, as was showed, is often taken for "decerno, statuo," "to decree, order, or determine," so with this composition it seems most to be restrained to that sense. 1 Pet. i. 20, it is said of Christ that he was προεγνωσμένος πρὸ καταβολῆς κόσμου,—he was "foreknown," or "fore-ordained, before the foundation of the world;" which is opposed to that which follows, φανερωθεὶς δὲ ἐπ' ἐσχάτων τῶν χρόνων δι' ὑμᾶς,—"manifested in the last times for you,"—and relates to the decree or fore-purpose of God concerning the giving of his Son. Hence πρόγνωσις is joined with ὡρισμένῃ βουλῇ, God's "determinate counsel," as a word of the same importance: Acts ii. 23, Τοῦτον δὲ ὡρισμένῃ βουλῇ καὶ προγνώσει, etc.: if there be any difference, the first designing the wisdom, the latter the will, of God in this business. In Rom. xi. 2 it hath again the same signification: "God hath not cast off τὸν λαὸν αὐτοῦ ὃν προέγνω," or the remnant which among the obstinate and unbelieving Jews were under his everlasting purpose of grace; in which place, causelessly and without any attempt of proof, the Remonstrants wrest the word to signify pre-approbation. Dec. Sent., art. 1, the whole context and design of the apostle, the terms "remnant" and "election," whereby the same thing is afterward expressed, undeniably forcing the proper acceptation of the word. Not only the original sense and composition of the word, but also the constant use of it in the Scripture, leads us away from the interpretation here pinned upon it.

[1] Plaut. in Curcul.
[2] Cic. pro Flacco et 2 de Legib pro Plancio.
[3] Plutarchus in Alcibiad.
[4] Lucian. in Prometh.

Farther; what is the meaning of *pre-approving?* God's approving of any person as to their persons is his free and gracious acceptation of them in Christ. His pre-approving of them in answer hereunto must be his eternal gracious acceptation of them in Christ. But is this Mr Goodwin's intendment? Doth God accept any in Christ antecedently to their predestination, calling, and justification (for they are all consequential to this act of pre-approbation)? This, then, is that which is affirmed: God approves and accepts of men in Christ; thereupon he predestinates, calls, and justifies them. But what need [for] all these if they be antecedently accepted? I should have expected that this foreknowledge should have been resolved rather into a middle or conditionate prescience than into this pre-approbation, but that our great masters were pleased (in the place newly cited), though without any attempt of proof, to carry it another way. That God should approve of, love, accept persons, antecedently to their predestination, vocation, and justification, is, doubtless, not suitable to Mr Goodwin's principles; but that they should love God also before they fall under these acts of his grace is not only openly contradictious to the truth, but also to itself. The phrase here of "loving God" is confessedly a description of believers; now, to suppose men believers, that is, to answer the call of God, antecedently to his call, will scarce be salved from a flat contradiction with any reserved considerations that may be invented.

This *solid* foundation being laid, he proceeds: "Those who thus love him, and he approves of them, he predestinates to be conformed to the image of his Son." It is true, the apostle speaks of them and to them that "love God," but doth not, in the least, suppose them as such to be the objects of the acts of his sovereign grace after mentioned. If God call none but those that love him antecedently to his call, that grace of his must eternally rest in his own bosom, without the least exercise of it towards any of the sons of men. It is those persons, indeed, who, in the process of the work of God's grace towards them, are brought to love him, that are thus predestinated and called; but they are so dealt withal, not upon the account or consideration of their love of God (which is not only in order consequential to some of them, but the proper effect and product of them), but upon the account of the unchangeable purpose of God appointing them to salvation;—which I doubt not but Mr Goodwin studiously and purposely omitted to insist upon, knowing its absolute inconsistency with the conclusion (and yet not able to waive it, had it been once brought under consideration) which from the words he aimeth to extract. As, then, to make men's loving of God to be antecedent to the grace of vocation is an express contradiction in itself; so to make it, or the consideration of it, to be previous unto predestination is an insinuation of a gross Pelagian figment, giving rise and

spring to God's eternal predestination, not in his own sovereign will, but the self-differencing wills of men. "Latet anguis" also in the adding "grass" of that exegetical term "pre-ordinated,"—*predestinated*, that is, *pre-ordinated*. Though the word, being considered in the language whereof it is, seems not to give occasion to any suspicion, yet the change of it from pre-ordained into pre-ordinated is not to be supposed to be for nothing in him who is expert at these weapons. To ordain is either "ordinare ut aliquid fiat," or "ordinem in factis statuere," or, according to some, "subjectum disponere ad finem." To pre-ordain is of necessity precisely tied up to the first sense;—to pre-ordinate, I fear, in Mr Goodwin's sense, is but to predispose men by some good inclinations in themselves, and men *pre-ordinated* are but men so *predisposed;* which is the usual gloss that men of this persuasion put upon Acts xiii. 48.

Thus far, then, we have carried on the sense affixed to these words, if it may so be called, which is evidently contradictious in itself, and in no one particular suited to the mind of the Holy Ghost.

He proceeds: "'To give you yet,' saith our apostle, 'a farther and more particular account how God, in the secret of his counsel, hath belaid things in order,'" etc.

This expression, "God hath belaid things in order to the salvation of them that love him," is the whole of the assurance here given by the apostle to the assertion formerly laid down for the consolation of believers; and this, according to the analogy and proportion of our author's faith, amounts only thus far: "You that love God, if you continue so to do, you will fall under his predestination; and if you abide under that, he will call you, so as that you may farther obey him, or you may not. If you do obey him, and believe upon his call (having loved him before), he will justify you; not with that justification which is final, of which you may come short, but with initial justification; which if you continue in and walk up unto, *solvite curas* when you are dead in your graves." This is called God's belaying of things in his secret counsel; whereby the total accomplishment of the first engagement is cut off from the root of God's purposes, and from the branches of his effectual grace in the pursuit thereof, and grafted upon the wild olive of the will of man, that never did, nor ever will, bear any wholesome fruit of itself to eternity. What is afterward added of the qualification of those whom God predestinates, being an intrusion of another false hypothesis, for the confirmation of an assertion of the same alloy, is not of my present consideration. But he adds, "Ye are to understand that whom he hath predestinated he hath also called, hath purposed or decreed to call, to the knowledge of his Son, or his gospel," as before, etc.

Ans. How he hath predestinated them is not expressed, but being so predestinated, God purposes to call them;—that is, them and only

them; for it is a uniform proceeding of God towards all whom he attempts to bring to himself which is here described. That is, when men love him and are approved of him, and are thereupon preordinated to conformity with Christ, then he decrees to call them, or, as the calling here mentioned is described (that ye may not mistake, as though any internal effectual work of grace were hereby intended, but only an outward moral persuasion, by a revelation of the object they should embrace), "he gives a more plain and effectual discovery of Christ to them than to any others." Doubtless it is evident to every one that (besides the great confusion whereinto the proceedings of God in bringing sinners to himself, or belaying their coming with some kind entertainments, are cast) the whole work of salvation is resolved into the wills of men; and instead of an effectual, operative, unchangeable purpose of God, nothing is left on his part but a moral approbation of what is well done, and a proposing of other desirable things unto men upon the account of former worthy carriage. And this is no small part of the intendment of our author in this undertaking.

That God decrees to *call* them, and only them, who *love* him, and upon that account are approved of him, when all faith and love are the fruits of that calling of his, is such a figment as I shall not need to cast away words in the confutation of it.[1]

Yet, lest any should have too high thoughts of this *grace of vocation*, he tells them by the way "that it doth not necessarily suppose a saving answer given to it by the called, no whit more than the calling mentioned, Matt. xx. 16, xxii. 14."

First, By Mr Goodwin's confession there is as yet no great advance made towards the proof of the assertion laid down in the entrance, and for the confirmation whereof this series and concatenation of divine graces is insisted on. Though men love God, are predestinated and accepted, yet when it comes to calling they may stop there and perish everlastingly; for "many are called, but few chosen." They are indeed belaid by a calling, but they may miss the place of its residence, or refuse to accept of its entertainment, and pass on to ruin. But,—

Secondly, They are so called as upon the account thereof to be justified; for "whom he *calls*, them he also *justifies*." "Yea, in case they obey." But this is the interpretation of the new apostle, not the old; neither hath the text any such supposition, nor will the context bear it, nor can the design of the apostle consist with it, nor any more consolation be squeezed from this place upon the account of it than of milk from a flint in the rock of stone. Neither,—

Thirdly, Doth the calling here mentioned hold any analogy with that of the many that are called but not chosen, pointed at in the

[1] Deut. [illegible] ck. xvi. 6; Matt. xi. 26; Eph. ii. 1–7.

second place instanced in, being indeed the effectual calling of the few who are chosen: for as our Saviour, in those places of Matthew, mentioned two sorts of persons, some that have a general call, but are not chosen, and others that, being chosen, are therefore distinguished from the former as to their vocation; so Paul here tells you that the calling he insists on is the peculiar call of God "according to his purpose" (the same purpose intimated by our Saviour); which, being suited of God to the carrying on and accomplishing of that purpose of his, must be effectual, unless he through mutability and impotency come short of accomplishing the design of his will and wisdom.

Neither is this salved by what follows, "that it is the intention of God to make this call sufficient for the end purposed;" yea, this part of the wallet is most filled with folly and falsehood: for as general purposes of giving means for an end, with an intention to bring that end about, that may or may not attain it, are most remote from God, and, being supposed, are destructive to all his holy and blessed attributes and perfections, as hath been shown; so the thing itself, of *sufficient* grace of vocation, which is not effectual, is a gross figment, not, whilst this world continues, by Mr Goodwin to be made good, the most of his arguments being importunate suggestions of his own hypothesis and conceptions. But he goes on,—

"The apostle advanceth towards his proposed end, and adds, 'Those whom he called, them he also justified,' or decreed to justify, in case the called obstruct him not in his way, or by their unbelief render not themselves incapable of justification."

Ans. That exception, "In case they obstruct him not," is a clue to lead us into all the corners of this labyrinth, and a key to the whole design in hand. Such a supposal it is as not only enervates the whole discourse of the apostle and frustrates his design, but also opens a door for the questioning of the accomplishment of any purpose or promise of God whatever, and, in one word, rejects the whole efficacy of the grace of the gospel, as a thing of naught. What strength is there in the discourse and arguing of the apostle, from the purpose and ensuing series of God's grace, to prove that "all things shall work together for good to them that love God," if the whole issue and event of things mentioned to that end depend not on the efficacy or effectual influences of those acts of God, one upon another, and all upon the end, they being all and every one of them, jointly and severally, suspended upon the wills of the persons themselves concerning whom they are (which yet here is concealed, and [not] intimated in the least)? How doth it prove at all that they shall never be separated from the love of Christ, that they shall be made conformable to him in glory, notwithstanding all opposition, upon the account of the dispensation of God's eternal and

actual love towards them, when the whole of their usefulness to the end proposed is resolved ultimately into themselves and their endeavours, and not into any purpose or act of God? Such as is the foundation, such is the strength of the whole building. Inferences can have no more strength than the principle from whence they are deduced. If a man should tell another that if he will go a journey of a hundred miles, at each twenty miles' end he shall meet with such and such refreshments, all the consolation he can receive upon the account of refreshments provided for him is proportioned only to the thoughts he hath of his own strength for the performance of that journey.

Farther; if in such expressions of the purposed works of God, we may put cases and trust in what supposals we think good, where there is not the least jot, tittle, or syllable of them in the text, nor any room for them, without destroying not only the design and meaning of the place, but the very sense of it, why may not we do so in other undertakings of God, the certainty of whose event depends upon his purpose and promise only? For instance, the resurrection of the dead: may we not say, God will raise up the dead in Christ, *in case there be any necessity that their bodies should be glorified?* What is it, also, that remains of praise to the glorious grace of God? This is all he effects by it: In case men obstruct him not in his way, it doth good. God calls men to faith and obedience; in case they obstruct not his way, it shall do them good. But how do they obstruct his way? By unbelief and disobedience: take them away, and God's calling shall be effectual to them. That is, in case they believe and obey, God's calling shall be effectual to cause them to believe and obey!

The cases then foisted into the apostle's discourse, in the close of this interpretation of the place (if I may so call it),—namely, that God will justify the called in case they obstruct not his way, and will glorify them whom he hath justified in case they continue and abide in the state of justification,—are, first, thrust in without ground, warrant, or colour of advantage, or occasion given by any thing in the text or context;—and, secondly, are destructive to the whole design of the Holy Ghost in the place whereinto they are intruded; injurious to the truth of the assertion intended to be made good, that "all things shall work together for good," proposed upon the account of the unchangeable purpose of God, and infallible connection of the acts of his love and grace in the pursuit thereof; and resolve the promised work and designed event wholly into the uncertain, lubricous wills of men, making the assurance given not only to be liable to just exceptions, but evidently to fail and be falsified in respect of thousands;—and, thirdly, render the whole dispensation of the grace of God to lackey after the wills of men, and wholly to

depend upon them, giving in thereby, as was said, innumerable presumptions that the word, for whose confirmation all these acts of God's grace are mentioned and insisted on, shall never be made good or established.

Take, then, in a few words, the sense and scope of this place, as it is held out in the exposition given of it by Mr Goodwin, and we will then proceed to consider his confirmations of the said exposition: "O ye that love God, many afflictions, temptations, and oppositions, ye shall meet withal; but be of good comfort, all shall work together for your good, for God hath appointed you to be like his Son, and ye may triumph in every condition on this account. For if ye, before any act of his special grace towards you, love him, he approves you, and then he predestinates you" (what that is I know not). "Then it is in your power to continue to love him, or to do otherwise. If ye abide not, then ye perish: if ye abide, he will call you. And when he doth so, either ye may obey him or ye may not. If ye do not, all things shall work together for your hurt, and ye will be like the devil;—if ye do, then he will justify you; and then, if ye abide with him, as perhaps ye may, perhaps ye may not, he will finally justify you, and then all shall be well." This being the substance of the interpretation of this place here given, let us now consider how it is confirmed.

That which, in his own terms, he undertaketh to "demonstrate," and to "vindicate from all objections," in his ensuing discourse, he thus expresseth, page 209, sect. 43: "These decrees, or purposed acts of God, here specified, are to be understood in their successive dependencies, with such a condition or proviso respectively as those mentioned, and not absolutely, peremptorily, or without condition."

Ans. The imposing of conditions and provisos upon the decrees and purposes of God, of which himself gives not the least intimation, and the suspending them, as to their execution, on those conditions so invented and imposed, at the first view reflects so evidently on the will, wisdom, power, prescience, and unchangeableness of God, who hath said, "his counsel shall stand, and he will do all his pleasure," especially when the interruption of them doth frustrate the whole design and aim of God in the mentioning of those decrees and purposes of his, that there will be need of demonstrations written with the beams of the sun to enforce men tender and regardful of the honour and glory of God to close with any in such an undertaking. Let us, then, consider what is produced to this end, and try if it will hold weight in the balance of the sanctuary. "This," saith he, "appears,—

"First, By the like phrase or manner of expression, frequent in the Scripture elsewhere. I mean, when such purposes or decrees of God, the respective execution whereof is suspended upon such and

such conditions, are, notwithstanding, simply and positively, without any mention of condition, expressed and asserted: 'Wherefore the LORD God of Israel saith, I said indeed that thy house, and the house of thy father, shall walk before me' (meaning in the office and dignity of the priesthood) 'for ever: but now saith the LORD, Be it far from me.' 'I said indeed;' that is, 'I verily purposed or decreed,' or 'I promised:' it comes much to one. When God made the promise, and so declared his promise accordingly, that Eli and his father's house should walk before him for ever, he expressed no condition as required to the execution or performance of it, yet here it plainly appears that there was a condition understood. In the same kind of dialect Samuel speaks to Saul: 'Thou hast done foolishly: thou hast not kept the commandment of the LORD thy God: for now the LORD had established thy kingdom upon Israel for ever; but now thy kingdom shall not continue.' 'The LORD had established;' that is, he verily purposed or decreed to establish it for ever,—to wit, in case his posterity had walked obediently with him."

Here we have the strength (as will be manifest in the progress of our discourse) of what Mr Goodwin hath to make good his former strange assertion. Whether it will amount to a necessary proof or no may appear upon these ensuing considerations:—

First, The reason intimated being taken neither from the text under debate, nor the context, nor any other place where any concernment of the doctrine therein contained is touched or pointed at, there being also no coincidence of phrase or expression in the one place and the other here compared, I cannot but admire by what rules of interpretation Mr Goodwin doth proceed to make one of these places exegetical of the other. Though this way of arguing hath been mainly and almost solely insisted on of late by the Socinians,—namely, "Such a word is in another place used to another purpose, or in another sense, therefore this cannot be the necessary sense of it in this,"—yet it is not only confuted over and over as irrational and unconcluding, but generally exploded as an invention suited only to shake all certainty whatever in matters of faith and revelation. Mr Goodwin in his instance goes not so far (or rather he goes farther, because his instance goes not so far), there being no likeness, much less sameness of expression, in those texts which he produces to weaken the obvious and literally-exposed sense of the other insisted on therewith.

To waive the force of the inference from the words of the Holy Ghost (seeing nothing in the least intimated in the place will give in any assistance thereunto), first, this thesis is introduced: "The purposes and decrees of God (confessedly engaged in the place in hand) are, as to their respective executions, suspended on conditions in men;" —an assertion destructive to the power, goodness, grace, righteousness,

faithfulness, wisdom, unchangeableness, providence, and sovereignty, of God, as might be demonstrated did it now lie in our way. To prove that this must needs be so, and that that rule must take place in the mention that is made of the purposes and decrees of God, Rom. viii. 28–30, 1 Sam. ii. 30 is produced, being a denunciation of God's judgments upon the house of Eli for their unworthy walking in the honour of the priesthood, whereunto they were by him advanced and called, and which they were intrusted withal, expressly upon condition of their obedience.

Let us, then, a little consider the correspondency that is between the places compared for their mutual illustration:—

First, In the one there is express mention of the purpose of God, and that his eternal purpose; in the other, only a promise, expressly conditional in the giving of it, amounting to no more than a law, without the least intimation of any purpose or decree.

Secondly, The one encompasseth the whole design of the grace of the gospel; the other mentions not any special grace at all.

Thirdly, The one is wholly expressive of the acts of God, and his design therein; the other declarative of the duty of man, with the issue thereupon depending.

This, then, is the strength of this argument: "God, approving the obedience of a man, tells him that upon the continuance of that obedience in him and his, he will continue them an office in his service (a temporal mercy, which might be enjoyed without the least saving grace); and which upon his disobedience he threateneth to take from him (both promise and threatening being declarative of his approbation of obedience, and his annexing the priesthood thereunto in that family): therefore God, intending the consolation of elect believers, affirms that all things shall work together for their good, upon this account, that he hath eternally purposed to preserve them in his love, and to bring them to himself by such effectual acts of his grace as whose immutable dependence one upon the other, and all upon his own purpose, cannot be interrupted, and therefore such as shall infallibly produce and work in them all the obedience which for the end proposed he requires;—his purpose, I say, thus mentioned, must be of the same import with the declaration of his will in the other place spoken of." If such a confounding of the decrees and denunciations, absolute purposes and conditional promises, spiritual things with temporal, and the general administration of the covenant of grace in Christ with special providential dispensations, may be allowed, there is no man needs to despair of proving any thing he hath a mind to assert.

Secondly, There are two things that Mr Goodwin insists upon, to make good his arguing from this place:—*First,* That these words, "I said indeed," hold out the real purpose and decree of God.

Secondly, That in the promise mentioned there was no condition expressed or required to the execution or performance of it.

By the first he intends that God did really purpose and decree from eternity that Eli and his house should hold the priesthood for ever; by the second, that no condition was expressed, either in terms, or necessarily implied in the thing itself, which is of the same import.

If neither of these, now, should prove true, what little advance Mr Goodwin hath made for the weakening of the plain intendment of the words in the place under consideration, or for the confirmation of his own gloss and interposed conditionals, either by this or the following instances, that are of the same kind, will plainly appear. Now, that these words, "I said indeed," are not declarative of an eternal decree and purpose of God concerning the futurition and event of what is asserted to be the object of that decree, the continuance of the priesthood in the house of Eli, may be evidenced, as from the general nature of the things themselves, so from the particular explanation of the act of God whereunto this expression, "I said indeed," doth relate.

First, From the general nature of the thing itself this may be manifested. To what hath been formerly spoken I shall add only some few considerations, being not willing to insist long on that which is but collateral to my present design.

First, then, When God decreed and purposed this (if so be he purposed it, as it is said he did), he either foresaw what would be the issue of it, or he did not. If he did not, where is his *infinite wisdom and understanding?*—if we may not be allowed to say his foreknowledge. How are "all his works known to him from the beginning of the world?"[1] How doth he "declare the end from the beginning, and the things that are yet to come?" distinguishing himself from all false gods on this account. If he did foresee the event, that it would not be so, why did he decree and purpose it should be so? Doth this become the infinite wisdom of God, to purpose and decree from all eternity that that shall come to pass which he knows will never come to pass? Can any such resolution fall upon the sons of men, to whom God is pleased to continue the use of that little spark of reason wherewith they are endued? If you say, "God purposed it should continue in case their disobedience hindered it not," I ask again, Did God foresee the disobedience that would so hinder it, or did he not? If he did not, the same difficulties will arise which formerly I mentioned. If he did, then God decreed and purposed that the priesthood should continue in the house of Eli, if they kept themselves from that disobedience which he saw and knew full well they would run into! *Cui fini?*

Secondly, If God did thus purpose and decree, he was able to bring it about, and accomplish his design by ways agreeable to his goodness,

[1] Acts xv. 18; Isa. xlvi. 10.

wisdom, and righteousness, or he was not. If he was not, where is his *omnipotency*, who is not able to fulfil his righteous designs and purposes in ways corresponding to that state of agents and things which he hath allotted them? How can it be said of him, "He will work, and none shall let him?" That God engageth his power for the accomplishment of his purposes was showed before. If he were able to accomplish it, why did he not do it, but suffer himself to be frustrated of his end? Is it suitable to the sovereign will and wisdom of God eternally to purpose and decree that which, by means agreeable to his holiness and goodness, he is able to bring to pass, and yet not to do it, but to fail and come short of his holy and gracious intendment?

Thirdly, The obedience of the house of Eli, on which the accomplishment of the pretended decree is suspended, was such as either they were able of themselves to perform, or they were not. To say they were, is to exclude the necessary assistance of the grace of God, which Mr Goodwin hath not in terms declared himself to do, nor are we as yet arrived at that height, though a considerable progress hath been made. If they were not able to do it without the assistance of the Spirit and concurrence of the grace of God, did the Lord purpose to give them that assistance, working in them both to will and to do of his own good pleasure, or did he not? If he did so purpose, why did he not do it? If he did not purpose to do it, to what end did he decree that that should come to pass which he knew could not come to pass without his doing that which he was resolved never to do? It is all one as if a man knew that another were shut up in a prison, from whence it was impossible that any body but himself should deliver him, and should resolve and purpose to give the poor prisoner a hundred pounds, so that he would come out of prison to him, and resolve withal never to bring him out.

Fourthly, God from eternity foresaw that the priesthood should not be continued to the house of Eli; therefore he did not from eternity purpose and decree that it should. To know that a thing shall not be, and to determine that it shall be, is a σχέσις rather beseeming a half frantic creature than the infinitely wise Creator. Again; upon what account did God foresee that it should not be so? Can the futurition of contingent events be resolved in the issue into any thing but God's sovereign determination? God, therefore, did not determine and purpose that it should be so, because he determined and purposed that it should not be so. Whatsoever he doth in time, that he purposed to do from eternity. Now, in time he removed the priesthood from the house of Eli; therefore he eternally purposed and determined so to do: which surely leaves no place for a contrary purpose and decree (not so much as conditional) that it should so continue for ever. The truth is, the mystery of this abomi-

nation lies in those things which lie not in my way now to handle. A *disjunctive decree*, a *middle science*, *creature-dependency*, are father, mother, and nurse, of the assertion we oppose, whose monstrous deformity and desperate rebellion against the properties of God I may, the Lord assisting, hereafter more fully demonstrate.

But you will say, "Doth not the Lord plainly hold out a purpose and decree in these words, 'I said indeed?' Did he say it? Will you assign hypocrisy to him, and doubling with the sons of men?"

I say, then, secondly, that the expression here used holds out no intention or purpose of God as to the futurition and event of the thing itself, that the priesthood should continue in the house of Eli, but only his purpose and intention that obedience and the priesthood should go together. There is a connection of things, not an intendment or purpose of events, in the words intimated. The latter cannot be ascribed to God without the charge of as formal mutability as the poorest creature is liable to. Mr Goodwin, indeed, tells you, sect. 43, p. 209, "That the purpose of God itself, considered as an act or conception of the mind of God, dependeth not on any condition whatever; and all God's purposes and decrees, without exception, are in such respect absolute and independent." How weak and unable this is to free the Lord from a charge of changeableness upon his supposal needs little pains to demonstrate. The conceptions of the minds of the sons of men, and their purposes as such, are as absolutely free and unconditional as the nature of a creature will admit; only the execution of our purposes and resolves is suspended upon the intervention of other things, which render them all conditional. And this, it seems, is the state with God himself, although in the Scripture he most frequently distinguisheth himself from the sons of men on this account, that they purpose at the greatest rate of uncertainty imaginable, as to the accomplishment of their thoughts, and therefore are frequently disappointed, but his purposes and his counsels stand for ever: so Ps. xxxiii. 10, 11. The expression then here, "I said," relates plainly to the investiture of Aaron and his seed in the priesthood. There was a twofold engagement made to the house of Aaron about that office,—one in general to him and his sons, the other in particular to Phinehas and his posterity. The latter to Phinehas is far more expressive and significant than the other. You have it Num. xxv. 11–13, "Phinehas, the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron the priest, hath turned my wrath away from the children of Israel, while he was zealous for my sake among them, that I consumed not the children of Israel in my jealousy. Wherefore say, Behold, I give unto him my covenant of peace: and he shall have it, and his seed after him, even the covenant of an everlasting priesthood; because he was zealous for his God, and made an atonement for the children of Israel." Here is a promise indeed,

and no condition in terms expressed;—but yet being made and granted upon the condition of obedience, which is clearly expressed once and again, that the continuance of it was also suspended on that condition, as to the glory and beauty of that office, the thing principally intended, cannot be doubted; yea, it is sufficiently expressed in the occasion of the promise and fountain thereof. But this was not that promise wherein Eli's was particularly concerned. Indeed, his posterity was rejected in order to the accomplishment of this promise, the seed of Phinehas returning to their dignity, from whence they fell by the interposition of the house of Ithamar.

That which this expression here peculiarly relates unto is the declaration of the mind of God concerning the priesthood of Aaron and his posterity, which you have Exod. xxviii. 43, xxix. 9, where the confirming them in their office is called "a perpetual statute," or "a law for ever." The signification of the term "for ever," in the Hebrew especially, relating to legal institution, is known. Their "eternity" is long since expired. That, then, which God here emphatically expresses as an act of grace and favour to the house of Aaron, which Eli and his had an interest in, was that statute or law of the priesthood, and his purpose and intention (not concerning the event of things, not that it should continue in any one branch of that family, but) of connecting it with their obedience and faithfulness in that office. It is very frequent with God to express his approbation of our duty under terms holding out the event that would be the issue of the duty, though it never come to pass; and his disapprobation or rejection of the sons of men under terms that hold out the end of their disobedience, though it be prevented or removed. In this latter case he commands Jonah to cry, "Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown;" not that he purposed the destruction of Nineveh at that time, but only effectually to hold out the end of their sin, that it might be a means to turn them from it, and to prevent that end, which it would otherwise procure. His purpose was to prevent, at least prorogue, the ruin of Nineveh; and therefore [he] made use of threatening them with ruin, that they might not be ruined. To say that God purposed not the execution of his purpose but in such and such cases, is a plain contradiction. The purpose is of execution, and to say he purposed not the execution of his purpose, is to say plainly he purposed and purposed not, or he purposed not what he purposed. The examples of Pharaoh and Abraham, in the precepts given to them, are proofs of the former. But I must not insist upon particulars.

This, then, is all that here is intended: God making a law, a statute, about the continuance of the priesthood in the family of Aaron, affirms that then he said "his house should walk before him for ever;" that is, with approbation and acceptation, for as to the

right of the priesthood, that still continued in the house of Aaron, whilst it continued, notwithstanding the ejection of Eli and his. Now, whether there were any conditions in the promise made, which is Mr Goodwin's second improvement of this instance, may appear from the consideration of what hath been spoken concerning it. It is called "a law and statute," "the act." On that account, whatever it were that God here points unto is but a moral legislative act, and not a physical determining act of the will of God, and, being a law of privilege in its own nature, it involves a condition; which the acts of God's will, vital and eternal, wherewith this law is compared, do openly disavow.

Let us now see the parallel between the two places insisted on for the explanation of the former of them; which, as it will appear by the sequel, is the only buckler wherewith Mr Goodwin defends his hypothesis from the irresistible force of the argument wherewith he hath to do:—First, The one speaks of things *spiritual*, the other of things *temporal;* secondly, The one of what *God will do*, and the other of what he approves to be done, *being done;* thirdly, The one holds out God's decree and purpose concerning *events*, the other his law and statute concerning *duties;* fourthly, The one not capable of interposing conditionals without perverting the whole design of God revealed in that place, the other directly including conditions; fifthly, The one speaking of things themselves, the other only of the manner of a thing; sixthly, In the one God holds out what he will do for the good of his, upon the account of the efficacy of his grace; in the other, what men are to do if they will be approved of him. And how one of these places can be imagined to be suited for the illustration and interpretation of the other, which agree neither in name nor thing, word nor deed, purpose nor design, must be left to the judgment of those who desire to ponder these things, and to weigh them in the balance of the sanctuary.

The other instances, in the case of Saul and Paul, being more heterogeneous to the business in hand than that of Eli, which went before, require not any particular help for the removal of them out of the way. Though they are dead as to the end for which they are produced, I presume no true Israelite in the pursuit of that Sheba in the church, *the apostasy of saints*, will be retarded in his way by their being cast before him. In brief, neither the connection of obedience and suitable rewards, as in the case of Saul, nor the necessity of means subservient to the accomplishment of purposes (themselves also falling under that purpose of Him who intends the end and the fulfilling of it), as in the case of Paul, is of the least force to persuade us that the eternal, immanent acts of God's will, which he pursues by the effectual, irresistible acts of his grace, so as to compass the end which he hath from everlasting determinately resolved

to bring about, are suspended upon imaginary conditions, created in the brains of men, and, notwithstanding their evident inconsistency with the scope of the Scripture and design of God therein, intruded into such texts of Scripture as on all hands (which will be evident in the sequel of this discourse) are fortified against them.

Besides, in the case of Paul, though the infallibility of the prediction did not in the least prejudice the liberty of the agents who were to be employed for its accomplishment, but left room for the exhortation of Paul and the endeavours of the soldiers, yet it cuts off all possibility of a contrary event, and all supposal of a distinctive purpose in God, upon the account whereof he cannot predict the issue or event of any thing whatsoever. But of this more largely afterward.

But this is farther argued by Mr Goodwin, from the purposes of God in his threatenings, in these words: "Most frequently the purpose and decree of God concerning the punishment of wicked and ungodly men is expressed by the Holy Ghost absolutely and certainly, without the least mention of any condition, or relaxation, or reversion; yet, from other passages of Scripture, it is fully evident that this decree of his is conditional in such a sense which imports a non-execution of the punishment therein declared upon the repentance of the persons against whom the decree is. In like manner, though the purpose and decree of God for the justification of those who are called (and so for the glorifying of those that shall be justified) be, in the scripture in hand, delivered in an absolute and unconditional form of words, yet it is no way necessary to suppose (the most familiar, frequent, and accustomed expressions in Scripture in such cases, exempting us from any such necessity) that therefore these decrees must needs bring forth against all possible interveniences whatever: so that, for example, he that is called by the word and Spirit must needs be justified, whether he truly believe or no; and he that is justified must needs be glorified, whether he persevere or no."

Ans. First, That the threatenings of God are *moral* acts, not *declarative*, as to particular persons, of God's eternal purposes, but subservient to other ends, together with the law itself, whereof they are a portion (as the avoiding of that for which men are threatened), is known. They are appendices of the law, and in their relation thereunto declare the connection that is between sin and punishment, such sins and such punishments.

Secondly, That the eternal purposes of God concerning the works of his grace are to be measured by the rule and analogy of his temporal threatenings, is an assertion striking at the very root of the covenant of grace, and efficacy of the mediation of the Lord Jesus, yea, at the very being of divine perfections of the nature of God himself. This there is, indeed, in all threatenings, declared of the absolute purpose

and unchangeable decree of God, that all impenitent sinners shall be punished according to what in his wisdom and righteousness he hath apportioned out unto such deservings, and threateneth accordingly. In this regard there is no condition that doth or can, in the least, import a non-execution of the punishment decreed, neither do any of the texts cited in the margin of our author prove any such thing. They all, indeed, positively affirm [that] faithless, impenitent unbelievers shall be destroyed; which no supposal whatsoever that takes not away the subject of the question, and so alters the whole thing in debate, can in the least infringe. Such assertions, I say, are parts of the law of God revealing his will in general to punish impenitent unbelievers; concerning which his purpose is absolute, unalterable, and steadfast.

The conclusion, then, which Mr Goodwin makes is apparently racked from the words by stretching them upon the unproportioned bed of other phrases and expressions, wholly heterogeneous to the design in this place intended. Added here are supposed conditions in general, not once explained, to keep them from being exposed to that shame that is due unto them when their intrusion, without all order or warrant from heaven, shall be manifested, only wrapped up in the clouds of possible interveniences; when the acts of God's grace, whereby his purposes and decrees are accomplished, do consist in the effectual removal of the interveniences pretended, that so the end aimed at in the unchangeable counsel of God may, suitably to the determination of his sovereign, omnipotent, infinite, wise will, be accomplished. Neither doth it in the least appear that any such calling by the word and Spirit as may leave the persons so called in their unbelief,—they being so called in the pursuit of this purpose of God to give them faith and make them conformable to Christ,—may be allowed place or room in the haven of this text. The like may be said of justification wherein men do not persevere. Yea, these two supposals are not only an open begging of the thing in contest, but a flat defying of the apostle as to the validity of his demonstration, that "all things work together," etc.

Notwithstanding, then, any thing that hath been objected to the contrary, the foundation of God mentioned in this place of Scripture stands firm, and his eternal purpose of safeguarding the saints in the love of Christ, until he bring them to the enjoyment of himself in glory, stands clear from the least shadow of change or suspension upon any certain conditionals, which are confidently, but not so much as speciously, obtruded upon it.

The next thing undertaken by Mr Goodwin is, to vindicate the forementioned glosses from such oppositions as arise against them from the context and words themselves, with the design of the Holy Ghost therein. These things doth he find his exposition obnoxious

unto,—the exposition which he pretends to give no strength unto but what is foreign, on all considerations whatsoever of words and things, to the place itself. This, it seems, is to "prophesy according to the analogy of faith," Rom. xii. 6.

First, then, sect. 44, to the objection, that those who are called are also justified, and shall be glorified, according to the tenor of the series of the acts of the grace of God here laid down, he answereth, "That where either the one or the other of these assertions be so or no, it must be judged of by other scriptures. Certain it is, by what hath been argued concerning the frequent usage of the Scripture in point of expression, that it cannot be concluded or determined by the scripture in hand." The sum of this answer amounts to thus much: "Although the sense opposed be clear in the letter and expression of this place of Scripture, in the grammatical sense and use of the words; though it flows from the whole context, and answers alone the design and scope of the place, which gives not the least countenance to the interposing of any such conditionals as are framed to force it to speak contrary to what, γυμνῇ τῇ κεφαλῇ, it holds forth; —yet the mind of God in the words is not from these things to be concluded on; but other significations and senses, not of any word here used, not from the laying down of the same doctrine in other places, with the analogy of the faith thereof, not from the proposing of any design suitable to this here expressed, but places of Scripture agreeing with this neither in name nor thing, expression nor design, word nor matter, must be found out in the sense and meaning of this place, and from them concluded, and our interpretation of this place accordingly regulated." "Nobis non licet," etc. Neither hath Mr Goodwin produced any place of Scripture, nor can he, parallel to this, so much as in expression, though treating of any other subject or matter, that will endure to have any such sense tied to it as that which he violently imposeth on this place of the apostle. And if the sense and mind of God in this place may not safely be received and closed withal from the proper and ordinary signification of the words (which is always attended unto without the least dispute, unless the subject-matter of any place, with the context, enforces to the sense less usual and natural), with the clear design and scope of the context in all the parts of it, universally correspondent unto itself, I know not how, or when, or by what rules, we may have the least certainty that we have attained the knowledge of the mind of God in any one place of Scripture whatever.

What he next objects to himself, namely, "That though there be no condition expressed in the instances by him produced, yet there are in parallel places, by which they are to be expounded" (but such conditions as these are not expressed in any place that answers to that which we have in hand), it being by himself, as I conceive, in

vented to turn us aside from the consideration of the irresistible efficacy of the argument from this place (which use he makes of it in his first answer given to it), I own not; and that because I am fully assured, that in any promise whatsoever that is indeed conditional, there is no need to inquire out other scriptures of the like import to evince it so to be,—all and every one of them that are such, either in express terms, or in the matter whereof they are, or in the legal manner wherein they are given and enacted, do plainly and undeniably hold out the conditions inquired after. His threefold answer to this objection needs not to detain us. Passing on, I hope, to what is more material and weighty, he tells us, first, sect. 44, that if this be so, "then it must be tried out by other scriptures, and not by this;" which evasion I can allow our author to insist on, as tending to shift his hands of this place, which, I am persuaded, in the consideration of it grew heavy on them. But I cannot allow it to be a plea in this contest, as not owning the objection which it pretends to answer. The two following answers being not an actual doing of any thing, but only fair and large promises of what Mr Goodwin will do about answering other scriptures, and evincing the conditionals intimated from such others as he shall produce (some, doubtless, will think these promises no payment, especially such as having weighed money formerly tendered for real payment have found it too light), I shall let them lie in expectation of their accomplishment. "Rusticus expectat, dum defluat amnis," etc.

In the meantime, till answers come to hand, Mr Goodwin proffers to prove by two arguments (one clear answer had been more fair), that these acts of God, calling, justification, and so the rest, have no such connection between them, but that the one of them may be taken and be put in execution, and yet not the other, in respect of the same persons.

His first reason is this: "If the apostle should frame this series or chain of divine acts with an intent to show or teach the uninterruptibleness of it, in what case or cases soever, he should fight against his general and main scope or design in that part of the chapter which lieth from verse 17, which clearly is this, to encourage them to constancy and perseverance in suffering afflictions: for to suggest any such thing as that, being called and justified, nothing could hinder them from being glorified, were to furnish them with a ground on which to neglect his exhortation; for who will be persuaded to suffer tribulation for the obtaining of that which they have sufficient assurance given that they shall obtain whether they suffer such things or no? Therefore, certainly, the apostle did not intend here to teach the certainty of perseverance in those that are justified."

Ans. That this argument is of such a composition as not to operate much in the case in hand will easily appear; for,—

First, These expressions, "In what case or cases soever," are foisted into the sense and sentence of them whom he opposes, who affirm the acts of God's grace here mentioned to be effectually and virtually preventive of those cases, and of [that] which might possibly give any interruption to the series of them.

Secondly, Whatsoever is here pretended of the main scope of the chapter, the scope of the place we have under consideration was granted before to be the making good of that assertion, premised in the head thereof, that all things should work together for good to believers, and that so to make it good, that upon the demonstration of it they might triumph with joy and exultation; which it cannot be denied but that this uninterruptible series of divine acts, not framed by the apostle, but revealed by the Holy Ghost, is fitted and suited to do.

Thirdly, Suppose that be the scope of the foregoing verses, what is there in the thesis insisted on and the sense embraced by us opposite thereunto? "Why, to suggest any such thing to them as that, being called and justified, nothing could possibly interpose to hinder them from being glorified,—that is, that God by his grace will preserve them from departing wilfully from him, and will in Jesus Christ establish his love to them for ever,—was to furnish them with a motive to neglect his exhortations." Yea, but this kind of arguing we call here *petitio principii*, and it is accounted with us nothing valid; the thing in question is produced as the medium to argue by. We affirm there is no stronger motive possible to encourage them to perseverance than this proposed. "It is otherwise," saith Mr Goodwin; and its being otherwise in his opinion is the medium whereby he disproves not only that, but another truth, which he also opposeth! But he adds this reason, "For who would be persuaded to suffer," etc.; that is, it is impossible for any one industriously and carefully to use the means for the attainment of any end, if he hath assurance of the end by these means to be obtained. What need Hezekiah make use of food, or other means of sustaining his life, when he was assured that he should live fifteen years? The perseverance of the saints is not in the Scripture, nor by any of those whom Mr Goodwin hath chosen to oppose, held out on any such ridiculous terms as whether they use means or use them not, carry themselves well or wickedly miscarry themselves, but is asserted upon the account of God's effectual grace preserving them *in* the use of the means, and *from* all such miscarriages as should make a total separation between God and their souls. So that this first reason is but a plain begging of those things which, to use his own language, he would not dig for.

But perhaps, although this first argument of Mr Goodwin be nothing but an importune suggestion of some hypotheses of his own, with an arguing from inferences not only questionable but unques-

tionably false, yet if his second demonstration will evince the matter under debate, he may be content to suffer loss in the hay and stubble of the first, so that the gold of the following argument do abide. Now, thus he proceedeth in these words: "And, lastly, this demonstrates the same thing yet farther. If God should justify all without exception whom he calleth, and that against all bars of wickedness and unbelief possible to be laid in their way by those who are called, then might ungodly and unbelieving persons inherit the kingdom of God. The reason of the connection is evident, it being a known truth that the persons justified are in a condition or present capacity of inheriting the kingdom of God."

Ans. But "carbones pro thesauro." If it be possible, this, being of the same nature with that which went before, is more weak and infirm, as illogical and sophistical as it. The whole strength of it lies in a supposal that those who are so called as here is intimated in the text,—called according to the purpose of God, called to answer the design of God to make them like to Jesus Christ, so called as to be hereupon justified,—may yet lay such bars of wickedness and unbelief in their own way, when they are so called, as not to be justified, when that calling of theirs consists in the effectual removal of all those *bars of wickedness and unbelief* which might hinder their free and gracious acceptation with God; that is, that they may be called effectually and not effectually. A supposal hereof is the strength of that consideration which yielded Mr Goodwin this demonstration. His eminent way of arguing herein will also be farther manifest, if you shall consider that the very thing which he pretends to prove is that which he here useth for the medium to prove it, not varied in the least! "Si Pergama dextra," etc. But Mr Goodwin foresaw (as it was easy for him to do) what would be excepted to this last argument,—to wit, that the calling here mentioned effectually removes those bars of wickedness and unbelief, a supposal whereof is all the strength and vigour it hath; and in that supposal there is a plain assuming of the thing in question, and a bare contradiction to that which from the place we prove and confirm. Wherefore, he answereth sundry things:—

First, That "Judas, Demas, Simon Magus, were all called, and yet laid bars of wickedness and unbelief, whereby their justification was obstructed." And to the reply, that they were not so called as those mentioned in the text, not called according to God's purpose, with that calling which flows from their predestination to be conformed unto Christ, with that calling which is held out as an effectual mean to accomplish the end of God in causing all things to work together for their good, and therefore that the strength of this answer lies in the interposition of his own hypothesis once more, and his renewed request for a grant of the thing in question,—he proceeds to

take away this exception by sundry cross assertions and interrogations. Sect. 45, "It hath not been proved," saith he, "by any man, nor I believe ever will be" (sir, we live not by your faith), "that the calling here spoken of imports any such act or work of God whereby the called are irresistibly necessitated savingly to believe. If it import no such thing as this, what hinders but that the persons mentioned might have been called by that very kind of calling here spoken of?"

Ans. It is known what Mr Goodwin aims at in that expression, "Irresistibly necessitated savingly to believe;" we will not contend about words. Neither of the two first terms mentioned is either willingly used of us or can be properly used by any, in reference to the work of conversion or calling. What we own in them relates, as to the first term, "irresistibly," to the grace of God calling or converting; and in the latter, "necessitated," to the event of the call itself. If by "irresistibly" you intend the *manner* of operation of that effectual grace of God (not which conquers in a reaction, which properly may be termed so, but) which really, and therefore certainly (for "unumquodque, quod est, dum est, necessario est"), produces its effect, not by forcing the will, but, being as intimate to it as itself, making it willing, etc., we own it. And if by "necessitated" you understand only the event of things,—that is, it is of necessity as to the event that they shall savingly believe who are effectually called, without the least straitening or necessitating their wills in their conversion, which are still acted suitably to their native liberty,—we close with that term also, and affirm that the calling here mentioned imports such an act of God's grace as whereby they who are called are effectually and infallibly brought savingly to believe, and so, consequentially, that the persons whose wickedness and unbelief abide upon them were never called with this calling here contended about. They who are not predestinated *a parte ante*, nor glorified *a parte post*, are not partakers of this calling. I must add, that as yet I have not met with any proof of Mr Goodwin's interpretation, nor any exception against ours, that is not resolvable into the same principle of craving the thing in question, producing the thing to be proved as its own demonstration, and asserting the things proved against him not to be so because they are not so. From the design and scope of the place, the intendment of the Holy Ghost in it, the meaning of the words, the relation and respect wherein the acts of God mentioned stand one to another, the disappointment of God's purpose and decree in case of any interruption of them or non-producing of the effects, which lead the subjects of whom they are spoken from one to another, we prove the infallible efficacy of every act of God's grace here mentioned as to their tendency unto the end aimed at; and this he that is called to believe may infallibly do.

"But," says Mr Goodwin, "this is otherwise." Well, let that pass.

He adds, secondly, "Suppose it be granted that the calling here spoken of is that kind of calling which is always accompanied with a saving answer of faith, yet neither doth this prove but that even such called ones may obstruct and prevent, by wickedness and unbelief, their final justification, and consequently their glorification. If so, then that chain of divine acts or decrees here framed by the apostle is not indissolvable in any such sense which imports an infallibility, and universal exertion or execution of the latter whensoever the former hath taken place." In this answer Mr Goodwin denies our conclusion, to wit, that the chain of divine acts of grace in this place is indissolvable (which that it is we make out and prove from the words of the text, the context, and scope of the place), and adds his reason, "Because they who are justified may lay bars in their way from being finally so, or being glorified;"—that is, it is not so, because it is not so; for the efficacy of the grace asserted is for the removal of the bars intimated, or wherein may its efficacy be supposed to consist, especially in its relation to the end designed? And so this place is answered. Saith the Holy Ghost, "Those whom God justifieth he glorifies." "Perhaps not," saith Mr Goodwin; "some things may fall in or fall out to hinder this." *Eligite cui credatis.*

Were I not resolved to abstain from the consideration of the judgments of men when they are *authoritatively* interposed in the things of God, I could easily manifest the fruitlessness of the following endeavour to prove the effectual calling of Judas by the testimony of Chrysostom and Peter Martyr; for neither hath the first, in the place alleged, any such thing (least of all, is it included in Mr Goodwin's marginal annotation, excluding compulsion, necessity, and violence, from vocation); and the latter, in the section pointed to and that following, lays down principles sufficiently destructive to the whole design whose management Mr Goodwin hath undertaken. Neither shall I contest about the imposing on us in this dispute the notion of final justification distinct from glorification, both name and thing being foreign to the Scripture, and secretly including (yea, delivering to the advantage of its author) the whole doctrine under consideration stated to his hand. If there be a gospel justification in sinners or believers in the blood of Christ not final or that may be cut off, he hath prevailed.

But Mr Goodwin proceeds to object against himself, sect. 46, "But some, it may be, will farther object against the interpretation given, and plead,—1. That the contexture between these two links of this chain, predestination to a conformity with Christ and calling, is simply and absolutely indissolvable, so that whoever is so predestinated never fails of being called; 2. That it is altogether unlikely that, in one and the same series of divine actions, there should not be the same fixedness or certainty of coherence between all the parts."

The first of these being the bare thesis which he opposed, I know not how it came to be made an objection. I shall only add to the latter objection, which includes something of argument, that the efficacy of any one act of God's grace here mentioned, as to the end proposed, depending wholly on the uninterruptible concatenation of them all, and the effectual prevalency and certainty (as to their respective operations) of every one of them being equal to the accomplishment of the purpose of God in and by them all, I willingly own it, especially finding how little is said, and yet how much labour taken, to dress up a pretended answer unto it. Of this there are two parts, whereof the first is this: "I answer," saith he,—

"First, by a demur upon the former of these pleas;" which was, that the connection between the predestination of God mentioned and his calling is uninterruptible. "Somewhat doubtful to me it is whether a person who, by means of the love of God which is in him at present, falls under his decree of predestination, may not possibly, before the time appointed by God for his calling, be changed in that his affection, and consequently pass from under that decree of predestination, and fall under another decree of God opposite thereunto, and so never come to be called."

Ans. I confess this demur outruns my understanding, *equis albis*,[1] neither can I by any means overtake it, to pin any tolerable sense upon it, though I would allow it to be suited only to Mr Goodwin's principles, and calculated for the meridian of Arminianism. For who, I pray, are they in any sense (in Mr Goodwin's) that do so love God as to fall under, as he speaks, that pendulous decree of predestination, and to whom this promise here is made? Are they not believers? Are any others predestinated, in our author's judgment, but those who are actually so? Is not the decree of predestination God's decree or purpose of saving believers by Jesus Christ? or can any love God to acceptation without believing? If, then, they are believers, can they alter that condition before they are called? We supposed that "faith had been by hearing, and hearing by the word of God," Rom. x. 17, and that it is of necessity, in order of nature, that calling should precede believing. What are men called to? Is it not to believe? Here, then, is a new sort of men discovered, that believe and fall from faith, love God and forsake him, all antecedently to their vocation or calling. I am confident that Mr Goodwin may be persuaded to withdraw this demurrer, or if not, that he will be overruled in it before the judgment-seat of all unprejudiced men. It will scarcely as yet pass currently that men are born believers, and after such and such a time of their continuance in that estate of belief, and being predestinated thereupon, God then calls them. Neither do I understand the meaning of that

[1] See Hor. Sat. i. 7, 8.—Ed.

phrase, "Never come to be called," used by him who maintains all to be called; but this is but a demurrer. The answer follows.

For the great regard I bear unto the author's abilities, I shall not say that his ensuing discourse doth not deserve to be transcribed and punctually insisted on; but this I may say, I hope, without offence, that it is so long and tedious, so remote from what it pretends unto, to wit, an answer to the forementioned argument, that I dare not venture upon the patience of any reader so far as to enter into a particular consideration of it.

The sum of it is, "That there is no unlikelihood in this, that though one part of the chain of divine graces before mentioned cannot be dissolved or broken, yet another may (notwithstanding that a dissolution of any one of them renders the design of God in them all wholly frustrate and fruitless)." This he proves by proposing a new series of divine acts in actual dependence one upon another, some whereof may be uninterruptible, but the others not so. He that shall but slightly view the concatenation of divine acts here proposed by Mr Goodwin for the illustration of that dependence of them and their efficacy which we insist upon, will quickly find it liable to some such small exceptions as render it altogether useless as to the end proposed; as,—

First, That the case here proposed, and pretended to be parallel to that under our consideration, is a *fictitious* thing, a feigned concatenation of feigned decrees of God, being neither in any one place delivered in the Scripture, nor to be collected from any or all the texts in the Bible; which course of proceeding, if it may be argumentative in sacred truth, it will be an easy and facile task to overthrow the most eminent and clearly-delivered heads of doctrine in the whole book of God.

Secondly, That it is a case surmised by him, suitable to his own hypotheses, neither true in itself nor any way analogous to that wherewith it is yoked, being indeed a new way and tone of begging the thing in question. For instance, it supposeth, without the least attempt of proof, 1. *Conditional decrees*, or a disjunctive intendment of events in God,—it shall come to pass, or otherwise; 2. A *middle science* conditional, as the foundation of those disjunctive decrees; with, 3. A *futurition* of things, *antecedent* to any determining act of the will of God; and, 4. A *possibility of frustrating*, as to event, the designs and purposes of God; and, 5. That *all mediums* of the accomplishment of any thing are conditions of God's intentions as to the end he aims at; and, 6. That God appoints *a series of mediums* for the compassing of an end, and designs them thereunto, without any determinate resolution to bring about that end; and, 7. That the acts of God's grace in their concatenation, mentioned in this place of Rom. viii., are *severally conditional*, because he hath

invented or feigned some decrees of God which he says are so;—all which, with the inferences from them, Mr Goodwin knows will not advance his reasonings at all as to our understanding, we being fully persuaded that they are all abominations, of no less base alloy than the error itself in whose defence and patronage they are produced.

To our argument, then, before mentioned, proving an equal indissolvableness in all the links of the chain of divine graces, drawn forth and insisted on from the equal dependence of the design and purpose of God on the mutual dependence of each of them on the other, for the fulfilling of that purpose of his, and obtaining the end which he professes himself to intend, this is the sum of Mr Goodwin's answer: "If I can invent a series of decrees and a concatenation of divine acts, though indeed there be no such thing, neither can I give any colour to it without laying down and taking for granted many false and absurd supposals; and though it be not of the same nature with that here proposed by the apostle, nor anywhere held out in the Scripture for any such end and purpose as this is; neither can I assign any absolute determinate end in this series of mine, whose accomplishment God engages himself to bring about (as the case stands in the place of Scripture under consideration),—then it is meet and equitable that, laying aside all enforcements from the text, context, nature of God, the thing treated on, all compelling us to close with another sense and interpretation, we regulate the mind of the Holy Ghost herein to the rule, proportion, and analogy, of the case as formerly proposed." This being the sum of that which Mr Goodwin calls his answer, made naked, I presume, to its shame, "valeat quantum valere potest."

I shall only add that,—1. When Mr Goodwin shall make good that order and series of decrees here by him mentioned from the *Scripture*, or with solid reason from the nature of the things themselves, suitably to the properties of Him whose they are;—and, 2. Prove that any eternal decree of God, either as to its *primitive* enacting or *temporal* execution, is suspended on any thing not only really contingent in itself and its own nature, in respect of the immediate fountain from whence it flows and nature of its immediate cause, but also as to its event, in respect of any act of the will of God, that it may otherwise be, and so the accomplishment of that decree left thereupon uncertain, and God himself dubiously conjecturing at the event (for instance, whether Christ should die or no, or any one be saved by him);—and, 3. Clearly evince this notion of the decrees and purposes of God, that he intends to create man, and then to give him such advantages, which if he will it shall be so with him, if otherwise it shall be so; to send Christ if men do so, or not to send him if they do otherwise; and so of the residue of the decrees mentioned by him;—and, 4. That all events of things whatsoever,

spiritual and temporal, have a *conditional futurition*, antecedent to any act of the will of God: when, I say, he shall have proved these, and some things like to these, we shall farther consider what is offered by him, yea, we will confess that "hostis habet muros," etc.

Of the many other testimonies to the purpose in hand, bearing witness to the same truth, some few may yet be singled out, and, in the next place, that of Jer. xxxi. 3 presents itself unto trial and examination: "Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee." It is the whole *elect* church of the seed of Jacob of whom he speaks, the foundation of whose blessedness is laid in the eternal love of God. Who the persons are thus beloved, and of whom we are to interpret these expressions of God's good-will, the apostle manifests, Rom. xi. 7, as shall afterward be more fully discoursed and cleared. He tells you it is the "election" whom God intends; of whom he says that they obtained the righteousness that is by faith, according to the purport of God's good-will towards them, though the rest were hardened, God (who adds daily to his church such as shall be saved, Acts ii. 47) drawing them thereunto upon the account of their being so elected. He calls them also the "remnant according to the election of grace," and the "people which God foreknew," verses 1, 2, 5, or from eternity designed to the participation of the grace there spoken of, as the use of the word hath been evinced to be. These are the "thee" here designed, the portion of Israel after the flesh which the Lord, in his free grace, hath eternally appointed to be his peculiar inheritance; which in their several generations he draws to himself with loving-kindness. And this everlasting love is not only the fountain whence actual loving-kindness, in drawing to God, or bestowing faith, doth flow (as they believe who are ordained to eternal life, Acts xiii. 48), but also the sole cause and reason upon the account whereof, in contradistinction to the consideration of any thing in themselves, God will exercise loving-kindness towards them for ever. That which is everlasting or eternal is also unchangeable; God's everlasting love is no more liable to mutability than himself, and it is an always equal ground and motive for kindness. On what account should God alter in his actual kindness or favour towards any, if that on the account whereof he exercises it will not admit of the least alteration? He that shall give a condition on which this everlasting love of God should be suspended, and according to the influence whereof upon it it should go forth in kindness or be interrupted, may be allowed to boast of his discovery.

That of the apostle, 2 Tim. ii. 19, is important to the business in hand, "Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his." Some persons of eminency and note in the church, yea, stars, it seems, of a considerable magnitude in the visible firmament thereof, having fallen away from

the truth and faith of the gospel, and drawn many after them into ways of destruction, a great offence and scandal among believers thereon (as in such cases it will fall out) ensued; and withal a temptation of a not-to-be-despised prevalency and sad consequence (which we formerly granted to attend such eminent apostasy) seems to have laid hold on many weak saints. They feared lest they also might be overthrown, and, after all their labouring and suffering in the work of faith and patience of the saints, come short of "the mark of the high calling" set before them. Considering their own weakness and instability, with that powerful opposition whereunto, in those days especially, they were exposed, upon the contemplation of such apostasies or defections, they were opportune and obnoxious sufficiently to this temptation. Yea, their thoughts upon the case under consideration might lead them to fear a more general defection: for seeing it is thus with some, why may not this be the condition of all believers? and so the whole church may cease and come to nothing, notwithstanding all the promises of building it on a rock, and of the presence of Christ with it to the end of the world; nay, may not his whole kingdom on earth on this account possibly fall to utter ruin, and himself be left a head without members, a king without subjects? This, by Mr Goodwin's own confession, is the objection which the apostle answereth, and removes in and by the words under consideration: Chap. xiv. pp. 359, 360, "Seeing these fall away, are not we likewise in danger of falling away, and so of losing all that we have done and suffered in our Christian profession? To this objection or scruple the apostle answereth in the words in hand." So he. Thus far, then, are we agreed. About the sense of the words themselves, and their accommodation to the removal of the objection or scruple mentioned, is our difference. I know not how Mr Goodwin comes to call it "an objection or scruple" (which is the expression of thoughts or words arising against that which is, in the truth of it), seeing it is their very state and condition indeed, and that which they fear is that which they are really exposed unto, and which they ought to believe that they are exposed to. In his apprehension, they who make the objection, or whose scruple it was, were in his judgment as liable unto, and in the same danger of falling away, or greater (their temptation being increased and heightened by the apostasy of others) than they that fell the day and hour before; neither could that falling away of any be said to raise a scruple in them that they *might* do so too, if this were one part of their creed, that all and every man in the world might so do.

The answer given by the apostle is no doubt suited to the objection, and fitted to the removal of the scruple mentioned; which was alone to be accomplished by an effectual removing away the solicitous fears and cares about the preservation of them in whose behalf

this is produced. This, therefore, the apostle doth by an exception to the inference which they made, or through temptation might make, upon the former considerations. Μέν τοι are exceptive particles, and an induction into the exemption of some from the condition of being in danger of falling, wherein they were concluded in the objection proposed. The intendment, I say, of the apostle, in that exceptive plea he puts in, "Nevertheless," is evidently to exempt some from the state of falling away, which might be argued against them from the defection of others. Neither doth he speak to the thing in hand, nor are the particulars mentioned exceptive to the former intimation, if his speech look any other way. Moreover, he gives yet farther the account of this exception he makes, including a radical discrimination of professors, or men esteemed to be believers, expressing also the principle and ground of that difference. The differing principle he mentioneth is, *the foundation of God that stands sure*, or the firm foundation of God that is established or stands firm; this is not worth contending about;—an expression parallel to that of the same apostle, Rom. ix. 11, "That the purpose of God according to election might stand." Both this and that hold out some eternal act of God, differencing between persons as to their everlasting condition. As if the apostle had said, "Ye see, indeed, that Hymeneus and Philetus are fallen away, and that others with whom you sometimes walked in the communion and outward fellowship of the gospel, and took sweet counsel together in the house of God with them, are gone after them; yet be you, true believers, of good comfort: God hath laid a foundation" (which must be some eternal act of his concerning them of whom he is about to speak, or [else] the solemn assertion of the apostle, than which you shall not easily meet with one more weighty, is neither to the case nor matter in hand) "which is firm and abiding, being the good pleasure of his will, accompanied with an act of his wisdom and understanding, appointing some (as is the case of all true believers) to be his, who shall be exempted on that account from the apostasy and desertion that you fear. This," saith the apostle, "is the fountain and spring of the difference which is among them that profess the gospel. Concerning some of them is the purpose of God for their preservation: 'they are ordained to eternal life.'" And herein, as was said, lies the concernment of all that are true believers, who are all his, chosen of him, given to his Son, and called according to his purpose. With others it is not so; they are not built on that bottom, they have no such foundation of their profession, and it is not therefore marvellous if they fall.

The words, then, contain an exception of true believers from the danger of total apostasy, upon the account of the stable, fixed, eternal purpose of God concerning their salvation, answerable to that of

Rom. viii. 28–30, the place last considered. The "foundation" here mentioned is the good pleasure of the will of God, which he had purposed in himself, or determined to exert towards them, for the praise of the glory of his grace, Eph. i. 9; according to which purpose we are predestinated, verse 11. And he calls this purpose the "foundation of God," as being a ground-work and bottom of the thing whereof the apostle is treating,—namely, the preservation and perseverance of true believers, those who are indeed planted into Christ, notwithstanding the apostasy of the most glorious professors, who, being not within the compass of that purpose, nor built on that foundation, never attain that peculiar grace which by Jesus Christ is to them administered who have that privilege. And this farther appears by the confirmation of the certainty of this foundation of God which he hath laid, manifested in the next words, "It hath this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his." Whether ye will take this either for a demonstration of the former assertion, *a posteriori*, from the peculiar love, favour, tenderness, and care, which the Lord bears to them which are his, who are built on the foundation mentioned, whereby, in the pursuit of his eternal purpose, he will certainly preserve them from perishing, knowing, owning, and taking care of them in every condition; or for the prescience of God, accomplishing his eternal purpose, designing them of whom he speaks as his (for his they were, and he gave them unto Christ),—is to me indifferent. Evident it is that this confirmation of the purpose mentioned is added to assure us of the stability and accomplishment of it, in that none who are built thereon or concerned therein shall fall away. And herein doth the apostle fully answer and remove the forementioned objection. "Let men," saith he, "appear never so eminent in profession, if once they prove apostates, they manifest themselves to have been but hypocrites; that is, such as never had any of the faith of God's elect, which is their peculiar who are ordained to eternal life."

This, then, beyond all colourable exception, is the intendment of the apostle in the words under consideration: "Though many professors fall away, yet you that are true believers be not shaken in your confidence; for God hath laid the foundation of your preservation in his eternal purpose, whereby you are designed to life and salvation, and by the fruits whereof you are discriminated from the best of them that fall away. Only continue in the use of means; let every one of you depart from iniquity, and keep up to that universal holiness whereunto also ye are appointed and chosen." And this is the whole of what we desire demonstration of, neither will less in any measure answer the objection or remove the scruple at first proposed.

But, it seems, we are all this while beside the intendment of the apostle, whose resolution of the objection mentioned is quite of an-

other nature than what we have hitherto insisted on, which Mr Goodwin thus represents, page 359, chap. xiv. sect. 14:—

"To this objection or scruple the apostle, in the words now in hand, answereth to this effect, that notwithstanding the falling away of men, whoever or how many soever they be, yet the glorious gospel and truth of God therein stands, and always hath stood, firm and steadfast: which gospel hath the matter and substance of this saying in it, as a seal for the establishment of those who are upright in the sight of God, namely, 'The Lord knoweth,' that is, takes special notice of, approveth, and delighteth in, 'those that are his,' —that is, who truly believe in him, love and serve him; yea, and farther hath this item, tending to the same end, 'Let every one that calleth upon the name of Christ,' that is, makes profession of his name, 'depart from iniquity.' So that in this answer to the scruple mentioned the apostle intimateth, by way of satisfaction, that the reason why men fall away from the faith is partly because they do not consider what worthy respects God beareth to those who cleave to him in faith and love, partly also because they degenerate into loose and sinful courses, contrary to the law imposed by the gospel; and consequently, that there is no such danger of their falling away who shall duly consider the one and observe the other. In asserting the stability of the truth of God in the gospel, by the way of antidote against the fears of those that might possibly suspect it, because of the defections of others from it, he doth but tread in his own footsteps elsewhere in this very chapter, 'If we believe not, yet he abideth faithful, and cannot deny himself.'"

Ans. If that necessity were not voluntarily chosen which enforceth men to wrest and pervert the word of God, not only to *mistaken*, but strange, uncouth, and inconsistent senses, their so doing might perhaps seem not to be altogether without colour and pretext; but when they willingly embrace those paths which will undoubtedly lead them into the briers, and, contrary to abundance of light and evidence of truth, embrace those persuasions which necessitate them to such courses, I know not what cloak they have left for their deviations. An example of this we have before us in the words recited. A sense is violently pinned upon the apostle's words, not only alien, foreign, to the scope of the place and genuine signification of the words themselves, but wholly unsuited for any serviceableness to the end for which the author of this gloss himself confesseth these expressions of the apostle to be produced and used.

The sum of Mr Goodwin's exposition of this place is this: The "foundation of God" is the gospel or the doctrine of it; its "standing," or "standing sure," the certain truth of the gospel; the "seal" mentioned is the substance or matter of that saying, "God knows who are his," contained in the gospel; and the answer to the objec-

tion or scruple lies in this, that the reason why men fall from the gospel (which neither is nor was the scruple, nor was it so proposed by Mr Goodwin) is because they consider not the love that God bears to believers,—that is, that he approves them whilst they are such, which is indeed one main part of the gospel; so that men fall from the gospel because they fall from the gospel, and this must satisfy the scruple proposed. It is an easy thing for men of ability and eloquence to gild over the most absurd and inconsistent interpretation of Scripture with some appearance of significancy; though I must needs say I know not rightly when nor by whom, pretending to any sobriety, it hath been more unhappily or unsuccessfully attempted than by Mr Goodwin in this place, as upon due consideration will be made farther appear. For,—

1. To grant that "the foundation of God" may be said so far to be the gospel, because his eternal purpose, so expressed, is therein revealed, which is the interpretation Mr Goodwin proposeth, I ask,—Whether the apostle applies himself to remove the scruple ingenerated in the minds of believers about their own falling away, upon consideration of the apostasy of others, and to answer the objection arising thereupon? This Mr Goodwin grants in the head, though in the branches of his discourse he casts in inquiries quite of another nature,—as, that a reason is inquired after why men fall from the gospel, and a suspicion is supposed to arise of the truth of the gospel because some fell from it; things that have not the least intimation in the words or context of the place, nor are of any such evidence for their interest in the business in hand that Mr Goodwin durst take them for ingredients in the case under consideration when he himself proposed it: so that he was enforced to foist in this counterfeit case to give some colour to the interpretation of the words introduced. But yet this must not be openly owned, but intermixed with other discourses, to lead aside the understanding of the reader from bearing in mind the true state of the case by the apostle proposed and by himself acknowledged. So that this discourse "desinit in piscem," etc.

2. The case being supposed as above, I ask whether the apostle intended a removal of the scruple and answer to the objection, as far, at least, as the one was capable of being removed and the other of being answered? This, I suppose, will not be scrupled or objected against, being indeed fully granted in stating the occasion of the words; for we must at least allow the Holy Ghost to speak pertinently to what he doth propose. Then,—

3. I farther inquire, whether any thing whatever be in the least suited to the removal of the scruple and objection proposed, but only the giving of the scruplers and objectors the best assurance that upon solid grounds and foundations could be given, or they were in

truth capable of, that what they feared should not come upon them, and that, notwithstanding the deviation of others, themselves should be preserved? And then,—

4. Seeing that the sum of the sense of the words given by Mr Goodwin amounts to these two assertions,—1. "That the doctrine of the gospel is true and permanent;" 2. "That God approves for the present all who for the present believe;" supposing that there is nothing in the gospel teaching the perseverance of the saints, I ask yet whether there be any thing in this answer of the apostle, so interpreted, able to give the least satisfaction imaginable to the consciences and hearts of men making the objection mentioned? for is it not evident, notwithstanding any thing here expressed, that they and every believer in the world may apostatize and fall away into hell? Say the poor believers, "Such and such fell away from the faith; their eminent usefulness in their profession, beyond perhaps what we are able to demonstrate of ourselves, makes us fear that this abominable defection may go on and swallow us up, and grow upon the church to a farther desolation." The answer is: "However, the gospel is true, and God bears gracious respects to them that cleave to him in love, whilst they do so." "Quæstio est de alliis, responsio de cepis." Methinks the apostle might have put them upon those considerations which Mr Goodwin proposes, as of excellent use and prevalency against falling away, that they put men out of danger of it (chap. ix.), rather than have given them an answer not in the least tending to their satisfaction, nor any way suited to their fears or inquiries, no, not [even] as backed with that explanation, that "they fall away because they degenerate into loose and sinful courses;" that is, because they fall away. A degeneracy into loose and sinful courses amounts surely to no less.

5. Again, I would know whether this "foundation of God" be an act of his will *commanding* or *purposing*,—declarative of our duty or his intention? If the first, then [I would know] what occasion is administered to make mention of it in this place?—whether it were called in question or no? and whether the assertion of it conduces to the solution of the objection proposed? Or is it in any parallel terms expressed in any other place? Besides, seeing this "foundation of God" is in nature antecedent to the "sealing" mentioned, or God's "knowing them that are his," and the object of the act of God's will, be it what it will, being the persons concerning whom that sealing is, [I would know] whether it can be any thing but some distinguishing purpose of God concerning those persons in reference to the things spoken of? Evident, then, it is, from the words themselves, the occasion of them, the design and scope of the apostle in the place, that the "foundation of God" here mentioned is his discriminating purpose concerning some men's certain preservation unto salvation;

which is manifestly confirmed by that seal of his, that he "knoweth them" in a peculiar, distinguishing manner;—a manner of speech and expression suited directly to what the same apostle useth in the same case everywhere, as Rom. viii. 28–30, ix., xi. 1, 2; Eph. i. 4–6.

"But," saith Mr Goodwin, "this is no more than what the apostle elsewhere speaks: Rom. iii. 3, 'What if some did not believe? shall their unbelief make the faith of God of none effect?'—that is, 'Shall the unbelief of men be interpreted as any tolerable argument or ground to prove that God is unfaithful, or that he hath no other faith in him than that which sometimes miscarrieth, and produceth not that for which it stands engaged?' implying that such an interpretation as this is unreasonable in the highest."

But truly, by the way, if it be so, I know not who in the lowest can quit Mr Goodwin from unreasonableness in the highest; for doth he not contend in this whole discourse, that the faith of God in his promises, for the producing of that for which it stands engaged (as when he saith to believers he will "never leave them nor forsake them"), doth so depend on the faith of men as to the event intended, that it is very frequently by their unbelief rendered of none effect? Is not this the spirit that animates the whole religion of the apostasy of saints? Is not the great contest between us, whether any unbelief of men may interpose to render the faith of God of none effect as to the producing of the thing he promiseth? "Tibi, quia intîsti, exedendum est."

But, 2. Let it be granted that these two places of the apostle are of a parallel signification, what will it advantage the interpretation imposed on us? What is the "faith of God" here intended? and what the "unbelief" mentioned? and whereunto tends the apostle's vehement interrogation? The great contest in this epistle concerning the Jews (of whom he peculiarly speaks, verses 1, 2) was about the promise of God made to them, and his faithfulness therein. Evident it was that many of them did not believe the gospel; as evident that the promise of God was made peculiarly to them, to Abraham and his seed. Hence no small perplexity arose about the reconciliation of these things, many perplexed thoughts ensuing on this seeming contradiction. If the gospel be indeed the way of God, what is become of his faithfulness in his promises to Abraham and his seed, they rejecting it? If the promises be true and stable, what shall we say to the doctrine of the gospel, which they generally disbelieve and reject? In this place the apostle only rejects the inference that the faithfulness of God must fall and be of none effect because the Jews believed not; whereof he gives a full account afterward, when he expressly takes up the objection and handles it at large, chap. ix.–xi. The sum of the answer he there gives as a defensative of the faithfulness of God, with a *non obstante* to the infidelity of some of the

Jews, amounts to no more or less than what is here argued and by us asserted, namely, that notwithstanding this (their incredulity and rejection of the gospel), "the foundation of God standeth sure, The Lord knoweth them that are his;"—that the promise, his faithfulness wherein came under debate, was not made to all the Jews, but to them that were chosen according to his purpose, as he expressly disputes it at large beyond all possibility of contradiction, chap. xi., as shall afterward be farther argued, and hath in part been already discovered. I verily believe never did any man produce a testimony more to the disadvantage of his own cause, both in general and in particular, than this is to the cause Mr Goodwin hath in hand.

Neither doth he advance one step farther in the confirmation of the sense imposed on the apostle's words, by comparing them with the words of the same apostle, verse 13 of the same chapter, "If we believe not, yet he abideth faithful; he cannot deny himself;" wherein again, contrary to the whole drift of Mr Goodwin's discourse, the faithfulness of God in the accomplishment of his promises is asserted to be wholly independent upon any qualification whatever in them to whom those promises are made: "Though we are under sufferings, temptations, and trials, very apt to be cast down from our hope of the great things that God hath *prepared* for us and *promised* to us, yet his purpose shall stand however, and our unbelief shall not in the least cause him to withdraw, or not to go through with his engagement to the utmost. The faithfulness of his own nature requireth it at his hand; 'he cannot deny himself.'"

What remains, sect. 14, wherein he labours farther to give strength unto, or rather more largely to explicate, what he formerly asserted, is built upon a critical consideration of the word Θεμέλιος, which, without any one example produced from any approved author, we must believe to signify a "bond," or "instrument of security given between men by the way of contract." And what, then, suppose it do? "Why, then, contrary to the whole scope of the place, and constant signification of the word in the Scripture, it must be interpreted according to the analogy of that sense." Why so? doth it remove any difficulty on the other hand? doth it more suit the objection for its removal, whereunto it is given, that we should warp from the first, genuine, native, usual signification of the word, to that which is exotic and metaphorical? "Yea, but we are enforced to embrace this sense, because that 'here is a seal set to this foundation, and men use not to set seals to the foundation of a house.'" And is it required that allusions should hold in all particulars and circumstances, even in such as wherein their teaching property doth not consist? The terms of "foundation" and "sealing" are both figurative; neither will either of them absolutely be squared to those things in nature wherein they have their foundation. The purpose of God

is here called his "foundation," because of its *stability, abidingness, strength,* and *use* in bearing up the whole fabric of the salvation of believers, not in respect of its lying in or under the ground, or being made of wood or stone. And in this sense, why may it not be said to be sealed? Spiritual sealing holds out two things,—confirmation, and conforming by impression; and in them consists the chief political use of the word and thing, not in being a label annexed to a writing. And why may not a purpose be confirmed, or be manifested to be firm, as well as a contract or instrument in law, having also its conforming virtue and efficacy (which is the natural effect of sealing, to implant the image in the seal on the things impressed with it), in rendering them, concerning whom the purpose of God is, answerable to the image of his Son, in whom the purpose is made, and that pattern which he hath chosen them to and appointed them for? What followeth to the end of this section is but a new expression of what Mr Goodwin pretends to be the sense of this place. The "foundation of God" is the gospel, or the promise of God to save believers; the "seal" is his taking notice of them to save them, and to condemn them that believe not; and therefore, questionless, believers need not fear that they shall fall away, though there be not the least intimation made of any thing that should give them the least comfortable or cheering security of preservation in believing. Only it is said, "He that believeth shall be saved" (which yet is not an absolute promise of salvation to believers), "and he that believeth not shall be damned;" which one disjunctive proposition, declarative of the connection that is between the means and the end, Mr Goodwin labours to make comprehensive of all the purposes of God concerning believers, it being such as wherein no one person in the world is more concerned than another. If the "foundation" here mentioned be only God's purpose, or rather declaration of his will, for the saving of believers and the damning of unbelievers, what consolation could be from hence administered in particular unto persons labouring under the scruple mentioned formerly hath not as yet been declared. Let us, then, proceed to farther proof of the truth in hand, and the vindication of some other places of Scripture whereby it is confirmed.

That which I shall next fix upon is that eminent place of John, chap. vi. 37–40: "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day. And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day." Our Saviour acquaints us with the design wherewith he came from heaven:

it was "not to do his own will,"—that is, to accomplish or bring about any private purposes of his own, distinct or different from them of his Father, as he was blasphemously charged by the Jews to do,—but he came to do the will of God, "the will of him that sent him." The "will of God" which Christ came to fulfil is sometimes taken for the "commandment which he received from the Father" for the accomplishment of his will. So Heb. x. 9, "I come to do thy will, O God,"—that is, to fulfil thy command; as it is expressed, Ps. xl. 8, "Thy law is within my heart." "Thy law, all that thou requirest at my hand as mediator, I am ready to perform." On this account is Christ said to "take on him the form of a servant," Phil. ii. 7,—that is, to become so indeed, in the assumption of human nature, that he might do the will of him that sent him. For which reason, also, his Father expressly calls him his servant: Isa. xlii. 1, "Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth; I have put my Spirit upon him: he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles." He is the servant of the Father in the accomplishment of that work for which the Spirit was put upon him. And verse 19, "Who is blind, but my servant? or deaf, as my messenger that I sent? who is blind as he that is perfect, and blind as the LORD'S servant." God gives him in command to fulfil his will, which accordingly he performs to the utmost. Again; the "will of God" is taken for his purpose, his design, decree, and good pleasure, for the fulfilling and accomplishment whereof the Lord Christ came into the world. And this appears to be the sense and importance of the words in this place, from the distinction which is put between the will of the Father and any such private will of Christ as the Jews thought he went about to establish, [namely, that] it was some design of his own. In opposition whereunto he tells them that he came to do the will,—that is, to fulfil the counsel, purpose, and design,—of the Father. However, should it principally be taken for the *command* of God, yet there is, and must needs be, a universal coincidence and oneness in the object of God's purposing and commanding will in all commands given unto Christ; because all of them shall certainly and infallibly by him be fulfilled, and so the thing certainly accomplished which is commanded. What now is the *will*, purpose, aim, design, and command, of the Father, whose execution and accomplishment is committed to the Lord Christ, and which he faithfully undertakes to perform, as he was faithful in all things to Him that appointed him? For the clearing of this, let these two things be observed:—1. Who the persons are concerning whom this will of God is. And those he describes by a double character:—(1.) From their *election*, the Father's giving them to him: "All which he hath given me," John vi. 39; that is, all his elect, as our Saviour expounds this very expression, chap. xvii. 6, "Thine they were, and thou gavest them me;"—"Thine

they were in eternal designation, thou having 'chosen them before the foundation of the world,' and thou gavest them to me for actual redemption, to deliver them from every thing that keeps them at a distance from thee." (2.) From their *faith* or believing, which he calls "seeing the Son, and believing on him," chap. vi. 40. The persons, then, here designed are elect believers, persons chosen and called of God. 2. What next, then, is the will of God concerning them? This also is set out both in general and in some particulars:—(1.) In general, *That none of them be lost;* that by no means whatsoever, by no temptations of Satan, deceits of sin, fury of oppressors, weakness or decay of faith, they perish and fall away from him, verse 39. This is the will, the design and purpose of God; this he gives to Jesus Christ in command for to accomplish. (2.) In particular, That they might have *everlasting life*, verse 40; that they be preserved to the enjoyment of that glory whereunto they are designed; that they may be *raised up at the last day*, and so never be lost, neither as to their being nor well-being. Of these two, verse 40, everlasting life is placed before the resurrection or raising of believers at the last day; plainly intimating that the spiritual life, whereof in this world we are partakers, is also, as to its certain, uninterruptible continuance, an everlasting life, that shall never be intercepted or cut off. That, then, which from this portion of Scripture I argue is this: God having purposed to give eternal life to his elect believers, and that none of them should ever be lost, and having committed the accomplishing and performance of this his good-will and pleasure unto the Lord Jesus, who was faithful unto him in all things, and endued with power (all power from above) for that end, they shall certainly be preserved to the end designed. The favour and love of God in Christ shall never be turned away from them; for his "counsel shall stand, and he will do all his pleasure."

Something is by Mr Goodwin offered to take off the strength of this testimony, but yet so little, that had I not resolved to hear him out to the utmost of what he can say in and unto the case in hand, it would scarce be thought needful to divert to the consideration of it. This place of Scripture he binds up in one bundle with nine or ten others, to the composure of one argument, which (almost *uno halitu*) he blows away, chap. xi. sect. 36, 37, etc., pp. 251, 252, etc. To the consideration of the argument itself there by him proposed I am not yet arrived. The influence of this text into it is from what is said of Christ's preserving believers; my present consideration is chiefly of the will and intention of the Father's giving them to him to be preserved; so that I shall observe only one or two things to his general answer, and then proceed to the vindication of this particular place we have in hand:—

First, He tells you, "That the conclusion of the former argument,

that true believers shall never miscarry or fall away, opposeth not his sense in this controversy." Whether it oppose his sense or no must be judged. This I know, that he hath to his utmost opposed it all this while, showing himself therein very uncourteous and unkind. But why so? on what account is it that this conclusion, which he hath so much opposed, is now conceited not to oppose him? "Those who thus fall away," saith he, "are no true believers, but wicked apostates, at the time of their falling away." That the conclusion mentioned opposeth his sense to me is evident; but that it is sense wherewith in this place he opposeth the conclusion is not so clear. The question is, Who fall away? "Not believers, but apostates," saith Mr Goodwin. We say so too. In the natural first sense of these words, [they] who *eventualiter* are apostates were never *antecedenter* to their apostasy true believers. But this is not your sense, doubtless. That those who fall away, in their falling away (which is the sense of that clause, "At the time of falling away"), were apostates,—that is, were fallen away before they fell away,—is neither our sense nor yours, for it is none at all. Bertius hath an argument against the perseverance of the saints, from the impossibility of finding a subject to be affected with the notion of apostasy if true believers be exempted from it; "for hypocrites," saith he, "cannot fall away." "Nor can believers," saith Mr Goodwin, "but they are apostates when they fall away!"—that is, it is a dead man that dies, or after he is dead he dies; after he is an apostate, he falls away. Perhaps it would be worth our serious inquiry to consider how believers can indeed possibly come to lose the Spirit of grace which dwells in them, with their habit of faith and holiness. For our part, we contend that they have an infused habit of grace, and that wrought with a mighty impression upon their minds and hearts; faith being of the operation of God, wrought by the exceeding greatness of his power, as he wrought in Christ when he raised him from the dead. Whether such a habit can be removed but by that hand that bestowed it, and whether it may be made appear that God will on any occasion so take it away, or hath expressed himself that he will so deal with any of his children, is, I say, worthy our inquiry. But,—

Secondly, He denies the major proposition, and saith, "That those who are kept and preserved by Christ may possibly miscarry." Boldly ventured! What want is there, then, or defect in the Keeper of Israel, that his flock should so miscarry under his hand? Is it of faithfulness? The Scripture tells us he is "a faithful high priest in things pertaining to God," Heb. ii. 17; "faithful to him that appointed him," chap. iii. 2; and that he did the whole will of God. Is it of tenderness, to take care of his poor wandering ones? He is otherwise represented unto us: Heb. ii. 18, "For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are

tempted;" and chap. iv. 15, "We have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin." Isa. xl. 11, it is said of him, "He shall feed his flock like a shepherd: he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young." And he quarrels with those shepherds who manifest not a care and tenderness like his towards his flock: Ezek. xxxiv. 4, "The diseased have ye not strengthened, neither have ye healed that which was sick, neither have ye bound up that which was broken, neither have ye brought again that which was driven away, neither have ye sought that which was lost;" all which he takes upon himself to perform, verses 15, 16. Or is it want of power? "All power is given unto him in heaven and in earth," Matt. xxviii. 18. "All things are delivered unto him of his Father," Matt. xi. 27. "He is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him," Heb. vii. 25. If he want neither care nor tenderness, wisdom nor watchfulness, love nor ability, will nor faithfulness, how comes it to pass that they miscarry and fall away into ruin whom he hath undertaken to keep? David durst fight with a lion and a bear in the defence of his lambs, and Jacob endured heat and cold upon the account of faithfulness; and shall we think that the Shepherd of Israel, from whose being so the psalmist concludes he shall want nothing, Ps. xxiii. 1, who did not only fight for his flock, but laid down his life for them, will be less careful of his Father's sheep, his own sheep, which are required also at his hand, for his Father knows them and calls them all by name?

"Yea, but," says Mr Goodwin, "it may be thus, in case themselves shall not comport with Christ in his act of preserving them, with their care and diligence in preserving themselves;" that is, Christ will surely keep them in case they keep themselves. Alas! poor sheep of God! If this were the case of the flocks of the sons of men, how quickly would they be utterly destroyed! Doth the veriest hireling in the world deal thus with his sheep,—keep them in case they keep themselves? Nay, to what end is his keeping if they keep themselves? Christ compares himself to be the good shepherd which seeketh out and fetcheth a wandering sheep from the wilderness, laying it on his shoulders, and bringing it home to his fold. How did that poor sheep keep itself, when it ran among the ravenous wolves in the wilderness? Yet by the good shepherd it was preserved. This is the spirit and comforting genius of this doctrine: "Christ keeps us provided we keep ourselves!" "We trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel;" that he gave us his Holy Spirit to abide with us for ever, to seal us to the day of redemption; that knowing himself, and telling us, that without him we can do nothing, he would not suspend his doing upon our doing so great a thing as pre-

serving ourselves. For let us see now what it is that is required in us if we shall be preserved by Christ: it is to *comport with him in his act of preserving us, and to be diligent to keep ourselves!*

What is this "comporting with him in his act of preserving us?" Our comporting with Christ in any thing is by our believing in him and on him; that is our radical comportment, whence all other closings of heart in obedience do flow. So, then, Christ will preserve us in believing, provided we continue to believe. But what need of his help to do so, if antecedently thereunto so we do? Is not this not only ἄγραφον, but also ἄλογον, not only unscriptural, but also unreasonable, yea, absurd and ludicrous? This is the flinty fountain of all that abundance of consolation which Mr Goodwin's doctrine doth afford. Doubtless, they must be wise and learned men (like himself) who can extract any such thing therefrom. Let him go with it to a poor, weak, tempted, fainting believer, and try what a comforter he will be thought, a physician of what value he will be esteemed. Let him tell him, "Thou art indeed weak in faith, ready to decay and perish, which thou mayst do every day, there being neither purpose nor promise of God to the contrary; great oppositions and great temptations hast thou to wrestle withal. But yet Christ is loving, tender, faithful, and in case thou continuest believing, he will take care thou shalt believe. That Christ will increase thy faith, and keep it alive by continual influences, as from a head into its members, preserving thee not only against outward enemies, but the treacheries, and deceits, and unbelief of thine own heart, of any such thing I can give thee no account." Such consolation a poor man may have at home at any time.

Farther; what is that act of Christ in preserving them that is to be comported withal? wherein doth it consist? Is it not in his daily, continual communication to them of new supplies of that spiritual life whose springs are in him; the making out from his own fulness unto them; his performing the office of a head to its members, and filling those other relations wherein he stands, working in them both to will and to do of his own good pleasure?[1] What is it, then, to comport with this act or these acts of Christ? Can any thing reasonable be invented wherein such comportment may be thought to consist, but either it will be found coincident with that whereof it is a condition, or appear to be such as will crush the whole undertaking of Christ for the preservation of believers into vanity and nothing? Again; hath Christ undertaken to preserve us against all our enemies, or some only?[2] If some only, give us an account both of them that he doth undertake against, that we may know for what to go to him and whereof to complain, and of them

[1] John i. 16; 1 Cor. xii. 13; Eph. i. 23, ii. 20–22, iv. 15, 16; Gal. ii. 20; Col. i. 17–19, ii. 19.

[2] Heb. vii. 25.

that he doth not so undertake to safeguard us against, that we may know wherein to trust to ourselves;[1] and let us see the places of Scripture wherein any enemies are excepted out of this undertaking of Christ for the safety of his. Paul goes far in an enumeration of particulars, Rom. viii. 35–39. If he hath undertaken against them all, then let us know whether it be an enemy that keeps us from this comportment with Christ, or a friend. If it be an enemy (as surely every thing in us that moves us to depart from the living God is), hath Christ undertaken against it, or no? If not, how hath he undertaken against them all? If he hath, how is it that it prevails? "Yea, but he undertakes this in case we comport with him;" that is, he undertakes to overcome such an enemy in case there be no such enemy. In case we be not turned aside from comporting with him, he will destroy that enemy that turns us aside from comporting with him. "Egregiam verò laudem et spolia ampla!" Or, on the other side, if our enemies prevail not against us, he hath faithfully undertaken that they shall not prevail against us.

"Yea, but," saith Mr Goodwin, "no Scripture proves that those whom Christ preserves must, by any compulsory, necessitating power, use their diligence in preserving themselves." And who, I pray, ever said they did? *Compulsory* actings of grace are your own figment; so are all such *necessitating* acts which proceed any farther than only as to the infallibility of the event aimed at. God doth not compel the wills of men when he works in them to will.[2] Christ doth not compel men to care and diligence when he works in them holy care and diligence. When the disciples said unto the Lord, "Increase our faith," they did not pray that they might be compelled to believe. God's working in them that believe according to the exceeding greatness of his power, "strengthening them with all might, according to his glorious power, unto all patience and long-suffering with joyfulness,"[3] is very far from any compulsion or necessitation inconsistent with the most absolute freedom that a creature is capable of. He that works faith in believers can continue it and increase it in them without compulsion.[4] And this is the sum of Mr Goodwin's answer to an argument that, notwithstanding all which he hath spoken, hath yet strength enough left to cast his whole building down to the ground. What he farther speaks to the particular place which gave occasion to this discourse may briefly be considered:—

He speaks something to John vi. 37, which I insisted not on. As to the purpose in hand, he tells you that "Christ will in no wise cast out τὸν ἐρχόμενον, 'him that is coming;' but yet he that is coming, in his way may turn back and never come fully up to him."

Ans. But if this be not *huckstering* of the word of God, I know

[1] John xv. 5; Isa. xxx. 1.
[2] John viii. 32; Rom. vi. 18; Luke xvii. 5.
[3] Col. i. 11, 12.
[4] Eph. ii. 8.

not what is.[1] The words before in the same verse are, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me." Saith Mr Goodwin, "They may come but half way, and so turn back again, not coming fully home to him." Saith Christ, "They shall come to me." Saith Mr Goodwin, "They may perhaps come but half way." "Nunc satis est dixisse, ego mira poemata pango." But why so? Why, ἐρχόμενον is "coming,"—a coming, it seems, *in fieri*, but not *in facto esse;* that is, it denotes a tract of time whilst the man is travelling his journey, as though believing were a successive motion as to the act of laying hold on Christ. But is he that is on his way, that Christ receiveth, a believer or not? hath he faith or not? If he hath no faith, the faith whereof we speak, how can he be said to be "coming," seeing the "wrath of God abideth on him?" John iii. 36. If he hath faith, how is it that he is not come to Christ? Hath any one true faith at a distance from him? God gives another testimony, John i. 11, 12. But saith he, "There is nothing in the words that they are under no possibility of falling away who come to Christ." But,—1. There is in those that follow, that, as to the event, they are under an impossibility of so doing, in respect of the will and purpose of God (which sufficeth me), as shall be made to appear. 2. That emphatical expression, Οὐ μὴ ἐκβάλω ἔξω, "I will in no wise cast them out," expresses so much care and tenderness in Christ towards them, that we are very apt to hope and believe that he will not lose them any more, but that he will not only not cast them out, but also, according to his Father's appointment, that he will keep them, and preserve them in safety, until he bring them to glory; as is fully asserted, John vi. 39, 40, as hath been declared.

Again, Mr Goodwin tells you, "It is not spoken of losing believers by defection of faith, but by death; and to assure believers of this, Christ tells them it is his Father's will that he should raise them up at the last day. Besides, if any be lost by defection from faith, this cannot be imputed to Christ, who did his Father's pleasure to the utmost for their preservation, but to themselves."

Ans. For the perverting of verse 37, the beginning of it was left out; and for the accomplishing of the like design upon verse 39 (which farther clears the mind and intendment of Christ in the words), verse 40 is omitted. He tells you that it is the will of the Father that every one that comes to him, that is, that believes on him, have everlasting life. What is everlasting life in the gospel is well known from John xvii. 3. And unto this bestowing on them everlasting life, his raising of them at the last day, as was mentioned, is a necessary consequent,—namely, that they may be brought to the full and complete fruition of that life which here in some measure they are made partakers of. Even in the words of verse 39, that passage, "I should

[1] 2 Cor. ii. 17.

lose nothing," extends itself to the whole compass of our Saviour's duty in reference to his Father's will for the safeguarding of believers. And is it only death, and the state of dissolution of body and soul, that it is the will of God that he should deliver them from, and the power of that, that it should not have dominion over them in the morning? The apostle tells us that he came to do the will of God, whereby we are sanctified, Heb. x. 9, 10. It was the will of God that he should sanctify us; and he tells his Father that he had kept all his own in the world, John xvii. 12; which, doubtless, was not his raising them from the dead. If he be the Mediator of the covenant of grace, if the promises of God be yea and amen in him, if he be our Head, Husband, and elder Brother, our Advocate and Intercessor, our Shepherd and Saviour, his keeping us from being lost extends itself no less effectually to our preservation from utter ruin in this life than to our raising at the last day; yea, and that exceptive particle ἀλλά includes this preservation, as well as leads us to the addition of the other favour and privilege of being raised to glory at the last day. In a word, this whole discourse is added to make good that gracious promise of our Saviour, John vi. 35, "He that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst;" which how it can be done by a naked engagement for the resurrection of them that come to him and abide with him, if many do, and most of all them that come to him may, depart from him and fall into everlasting ruin, needs Mr Goodwin's farther labour and pains to unfold. What is lastly added concerning Christ's doing the utmost of his Father's pleasure for their custody, but the fault is their own who fall away, is the same inconsistent, ridiculous assertion with that erewhile considered; with this addition, that whereas it is his Father's pleasure that they be saved, Christ doth his pleasure to the utmost, and yet saved they are not. And so much (if not too much) for the vindication of this testimony witnessing to the truth that we have in hand.

Matt. xxiv. 24 comes in the next place to be considered (an unquestionable evidence to the truth), and that voluntarily, of its own accord, speaking so plain to the matter in hand, that it were a sin against clear light to refuse to attend unto it; so far is it from being "compelled to bear the cross of this service," as Mr Goodwin phrases the matter, chap. x. sect 9, pp. 181–183. "'They shall seduce, if it were possible, the very elect.' Hence," saith he, "it is inferred that the deceiving or seducing of them that believe is a thing impossible; which is the drawing of darkness out of light." Strange! to me it seems so far from a forced inference, or a strained drawing of a conclusion, that it is but the conversion of the terms of the same identical supposition. He that says they shall deceive the very elect, if it were possible, so mighty shall be their prevalency in seducing,

seems to me (and would, I doubt not, do so to others, did not their prejudices and engagements force them to stop their ears and shut their eyes) to say that it is impossible the elect should be seduced.

But let the place, as it deserves, be more distinctly considered; it is among them which I refer to the head of the purposes of God, and a purpose of God there is (though not expressed, yet) included in the words. The impossibility of the seduction of some persons from the faith is here asserted. Whence doth this impossibility arise? Not from any thing in themselves,—not from their own careful consideration of all the concernments of their condition; the only preservative in such a season, if some, who pretend themselves skilful and experienced, yea almost the only physicians of souls, may be believed. They can never stand upon such sands against that opposition they shall be sure to meet withal. Our Saviour therefore intimates whence the impossibility expressed doth flow, in a description of the persons of whom it is affirmed, in reference to the purpose of God concerning them. They are the "elect," those whom God hath "chosen before the foundation of the world, that they should be holy and without blame before him in love." His "purpose according to election" must stand firm, and therefore "the election" itself shall obtain.[1] This, then, is that which is here affirmed: God having chosen some, or elected them to life, according to the "purpose which he purposed in himself," and faith being bestowed on them, they believing on the account of their being "ordained to eternal life," it is impossible they should be seduced so as to be thrown down from that state and condition of acceptance with God (for the substance of it) wherein they stand.[2]

Some few observations will farther clear the mind of the Holy Ghost, and obviate the exceptions that are put in against our receiving the words in their plain, proper, obvious signification. Observe, then,—

1. Upon the intimation of the great power and prevalency of seducers, our Saviour adds this, as a matter of great consolation to true and sound believers, that notwithstanding all this, all their attempts, however advantaged by force or subtlety, yet they shall be preserved. This the whole context enforceth us to receive, and our adversaries to confess that at least a great difficulty of their seduction is intimated. And it arises with no less evidence that this difficulty is distinguishing in respect of the persons exposed to seduction;—that some are elect, who should be seduced if it were possible; others not, that may and shall be prevailed against.

2. The bottom of the consolation, in the freedom of the persons here spoken of from falling under the prevailing power of seducers, consists in this, that they are the elect of God, such as on a personal

[1] Eph. i. 4; Rom. ix. 11, 12, xi. 7. [2] Eph. i. 9; Phil. i. 29; Acts xiii. 48.

consideration are chosen of God from all eternity, to be kept and preserved by his power to salvation, notwithstanding any interveniencies or oppositions which he will suffer to lie in their way. "But," saith Mr Goodwin, "these men, at least before their calling, are as liable to be deceived or seduced as other men. This is their own confession; and Paul says that they were sometimes deceived, Tit. iii. 3."

Ans. An exception, doubtless, unworthy him that makes it; who, had he not resolved to say all that ever had been said by any to the business in hand, would scarcely, I presume, have made use thereof. The seduction of persons is not opposed to their *election*, but to their *believing*. Mention is made of their election, to distinguish them from those other professors which should be seduced, and to discover the foundation of their stability under their trials; but it is of them as believers (in which consideration the attempts of seducers are advanced against them) that he speaks. It is not the seducing of the *elect* as *elect*, but of *believers* who are *elect*, and because they are elected, that is denied.

3. That it is a seduction unto a total and final departure from Christ and faith in him whose impossibility in respect of the election is here asserted. "But," saith Mr Goodwin, chap. x. sect. 10, p. 181, "this is to presume, not to argue or believe; for there is not the least ground in the word whereon to build such an interpretation." But the truth is, without any presumption or much labour for proof, the falsity of this exception will quickly appear to any one that shall but view the context. It is evidently such a seduction as they are exposed unto and fall under who endure not unto the end, that they may be saved, Matt. xxiv. 13; and they who are excepted upon the account mentioned are opposed to them who, being seduced, and their love being made cold, and their iniquities abounding, perish everlastingly, verses 11, 12.

4. It is, then, a denial of their being cast out by the power of seducers from their state and condition of believing and acceptation with God wherein they stand, that our Saviour here asserts, and gives out to their consolation,—they shall not be seduced, that is, drawn off from that state wherein they are to a state of unregeneracy, infidelity, and enmity to God: so that, as Mr Goodwin observes in the next place, we deny them, from hence, not only to be subject to a *final* but also to a *total* seduction.

5. We grant that notwithstanding the security given, which respects the state and condition of the persons spoken of, yet they may be, and often are, seduced and drawn aside into ways that are not right, into errors and false doctrines, through the "cunning sleight of men who lie in wait to deceive," but never into such (as to any abode in them) which are inconsistent with the union with their Head and his life in them.

The errors and ways whereinto they are, or may be, seduced are either such as, though dangerous, yea, in their consequences pernicious, yet have not such an aspect upon the faith of believers as to deny a possibility of union and holding the Head upon other accounts. I doubt not but that men for a season *may not know*, may *disbelieve* and deny, some fundamental articles of Christian religion, and yet not be absolutely concluded not to hold the Head by any sinew or ligament, to have no influence of life by any other means. Was it not so with the apostles when they questioned the resurrection of Christ, and with the Corinthians who denied the resurrection of the saints?—an abode, I confess, in either of which errors would, when the consequences of them are manifested, prove pernicious to the souls of men; but that they have in themselves such an absolute repugnancy unto and inconsistency with the life of Christ, however considered, as that their entertainment for a season should be immediately exclusive thereof, I suppose Mr Goodwin himself will not say. In this sense, then, we grant that true, saving, justifying faith may consist with the denial of some fundamental articles of Christian religion for a season; but that any true believer can persist in such a heresy we deny, he having the promise of the Spirit to lead him into all necessary truth.

There are such ways and things as in their own nature have an inconsistency with the life of Christ, as the *abnegation of Christ himself*. But this also we affirm to be twofold, or to receive a twofold consideration:—1. It may be resolved, upon consideration, with the deliberate consent of the whole soul; which we utterly deny that believers can or shall be left unto for a moment, or that ever any true believer was so. 2. Such as may be squeezed out of the mouths of men by the surprisal of some great, dreadful, and horrible temptation, without any habitual or cordial assent to any such abomination, or disaffection to Christ, or resolute rebellion against him. Thus Peter fell into the abnegation of Christ, whose faith yet under it did not perish, if our Saviour was heard in his prayer for him, having an eye to that very temptation of his wherein he was to be tried, and his fall under it. In the first sense are those words of our Saviour, Matt. x. 33, to be understood, and not in the latter. Christ was so far from denying Peter before his Father under his abnegation of him, that he never manifested more care and tenderness towards any believer than towards him in that condition. And this wholly removes Mr Goodwin's 10th section out of our way, without troubling of ourselves to hold up that distinction of a final denial of Christ, and that not final, seeing in all probability he set it up himself that he might have the honour to cast it down.

What follows in Mr Goodwin from the beginning of sect. 11, chap x., to the end of sect. 17, is little more than a translation of the

Remonstrants' sophistry in vexing this text in their Synodalia; which he knows full well where to find discussed and removed. For the sake of our English readers, I shall not avoid the consideration of it. I affirm, then, that the phrase εἰ δυνατόν here denotes the impossibility of the event denied, the manner of speech, circumstances of the place, with the aim of our Saviour in speaking, exacting this sense of the words. The words are, Ὥστε πλανῆσαι, εἰ δυνατὸν, καὶ τοὺς ἐκλεκτούς. It is the constant import of the word ὥστε to design the event of the thing which, by what attends it, is asserted or denied (so Gal. ii. 13; Matt. viii. 28, xv. 31; 1 Thess. i. 8), neither is it ever used for ἵνα. In the place by some instanced for it, Rom. vii. 6, it points clearly at the event. Ἵνα is sometimes put for it, but not on the contrary. And the words εἰ δυνατόν, though not so used always (although sometimes they are, as Gal. iv. 15), do signify at least a moral impossibility, when they refer to the endeavours of men; but relating to the prediction of an event by God himself, they are equivalent to an absolute negation of it. That of Acts xx. 16 is urged to the contrary. Paul hoped εἰ δυνατόν, to be at Jerusalem at Pentecost. "'If it be possible' here cannot imply an impossibility as to the event," says Mr Goodwin. But are these places parallel? Are all places where the same phrase is used always to be expounded in the same sense? The terms here, "If it be possible," respect not the *futurition* of the thing, but the *uncertainty* to Paul of its possibility or impossibility; the uncertainty, I say, of Paul in his conjecture whether he should get to Jerusalem by such a time or no, of which he was ignorant. Did our Saviour here conjecture about a thing whereof he was ignorant whether it would come to pass or no? We say not, then, that in this place, where εἰ δυνατόν is expressive of the uncertainty of him that attempts any thing of its event, that it affirms an impossibility of it, and so to insinuate that Paul made all haste to do that which he knew was impossible for him to do; but that the words are used in these two places in distinct senses, according to the enclosure that is made of them by others. "But," saith Mr Goodwin, "to say that Paul might be ignorant whether his being at Jerusalem by Pentecost might be possible or no, and that he only resolved to make trial of the truth herein to the utmost, is to asperse this great apostle with a ridiculous imputation of ignorance." And why so, I pray you? It is true he was a great apostle indeed; but it was no part of his apostolical furnishment to know in what space of time he might make a sea-voyage. Had Mr Goodwin ever been at sea, he would not have thought it ridiculous ignorance for a man to be uncertain in what space of time he might sail from Miletus to Ptolemais. Paul had a short time to finish this voyage in. He was at Philippi at the days of unleavened bread, and afterward, verse 6; thence he was five days sailing to Troas,

verse 6; and there he abode seven days more. It may well be supposed that it cost him not less than seven days more to come to Miletus, verses 13–15. How long he tarried there is uncertain. Evident, however, it is, that there was a very small space of time left to get to Jerusalem by Pentecost. Paul was one that had met not only with calms and contrary winds, but shipwreck also, 2 Cor. xi. 25; so that he might well doubt whether it were possible for him to make his voyage in that space of time he had designed to do it in, and this surely without the least disparagement to his apostolical knowledge and wisdom. In brief, when this phrase relates to the cares and desires of men, and unto any thing of their ignorance of the issue, it may design the uncertainty of the event, as in this place and that of Rom. xii. 18; but when it points at the event itself, it peremptorily designs its accomplishment or not, according to the tendency of the expression, which affirms or denies. Notwithstanding, then, all evasions, the simple, direct, and proper sense of our Saviour's words,—who is setting forth and aggravating the prevalency of seducers in evil times, by him then foretold,—is, that it shall be such and so great as that, if it were not impossible upon the account of their election, they should prevail against the very elect themselves. But,—

6. Suppose it be granted that the words refer to the endeavours of the seducers in this place, yet they must needs deny their prevalency as to the end aimed at. It is asserted either to be possible that the elect should be so seduced, or not. If not, we have what we aim at. If it be possible, and so here asserted, the total of this expression of our Saviour will be resolved into a conclusion certainly most remote from his intendment: "If it be possible that the elect may be seduced, then shall they be seduced; but it is possible (say our adversaries), therefore they shall be seduced." Neither doth that which Mr Goodwin urgeth, sect. 12, out of the Synodalia before mentioned, pp. 314, 315, at all prove that the words denote only a difficulty of the thing aimed at, with relation to the earnest endeavours of seducers. Πρὸς τό doth indeed intimate their endeavours, but withal their fruitlessness as to the event. Εἰ δυνατόν is not referred (as in the example of Paul,) to the thoughts of their minds, but to the success foretold by Christ. That emphatical and diacritical expression in the description of them against whom their attempts are, "Even the very elect," argues their exemption. "And if by 'elect' are meant simply and only believers as such, how comes this emphatical expression and description of them to be used, when they alone and no others can be seduced? for those who seem to believe only cannot be said to fall from the faith," say our adversaries. It is true, the professors of Christianity adhered of old under many trials; for the greater part, with eminent constancy to their

profession; yet is not any thing eminently herein held out in that saying which Mr Goodwin calls proverbial in Galen, he speaking of the followers of Moses the same as of the followers of Christ. What else follows in Mr Goodwin from the same author is nothing but the pressing of, I think, one of the most absurd arguments that ever learned men made use of in any controversy; and yet, such as it is, we shall meet with it over and over (as we have done often already), before we arrive at the end of this discourse; and, therefore, to avoid tediousness, I shall not here insist upon it. With its mention it shall be passed by. It is concerning the uselessness of means, and exhortations unto the use of them, if the end to be attained by them be irrevocably determined, although those exhortations are part of the means appointed for the accomplishment of the end so designed. I shall not, as I said, in this place insist upon it; one thing only shall I observe. In sect. 17, he grants, "That God is able to determine the wills of the elect to the use of means proper and sufficient to prevent their being deceived." By this "determining the wills of the elect to the use of proper means," the efficacy of grace in and with believers, to a certain preservation of them to the end, is intended. It is the thing he opposeth, as we are informed in the next words: "He hath nowhere declared himself willing or resolved to do it." That by this one assertion Mr Goodwin hath absolved our doctrine from all the absurd consequences and guilt of I know not what abominations, which in various criminations he hath charged upon it, is evident upon the first view and consideration. All that we affirm God to do, Mr Goodwin grants that he can do. Now, if God should do all he is able, there would no absurdity or evil that is truly so follow. What he can do, that he can decree to do; and this is the sum of our doctrine, which he hath chosen to oppose. God, we say, hath everlastingly purposed to give, and doth actually give, his Holy Spirit to believers, to put forth such an exceeding greatness of power as whereby, in the use of means, they shall certainly be preserved to salvation. "This God can do," says our author. This concession being made by the Remonstrants in their Synodalia, Mr Goodwin, I presume, thought it but duty to be as free as his predecessors, and therefore consented unto it also, although it be an axe laid at the root of almost all the arguments he sets up against the truth, as shall hereafter be farther manifested.

I draw now to a close of those places which, among many others omitted, tender themselves unto the proof of the stable, unchangeable purpose of God, concerning the safeguarding and preservation of believers in his love and unto salvation. I shall mention one or two more, and close this second scriptural demonstration of the truth in hand. The first is that eminent place of Eph. i. 3–5, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed

us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love; having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will." Verse 3, the apostle summarily blesseth God for all the spiritual mercies which in Jesus Christ he blesseth his saints withal; of all which, verse 4, he discovereth the *fountain* and spring, which is his free choosing of them before the foundation of the world. That an eternal act of the will of God is hereby designed is beyond dispute; and it is that "foundation of God" on which the whole of the building mentioned and portrayed in the following verse is laid. All the grace and favour of God towards his saints, in their justification, adoption, and glory, all the fruits of the Spirit, which they enjoy in faith and sanctification, flow from this one fountain; and these the apostle describes at large in the verses following. The aim of God in this eternal and unchangeable act of his will, he tells us, is, that we should be "without blame before him in love." Certainly cursed apostates, backsliders in heart, in whom his soul takes no pleasure, are very far from being without blame before God in love. Those that are within the compass of this purpose of God must be preserved unto that state and condition which God aims to bring them unto, by all the fruits and issues of that purpose of his, which was pointed at before.

A scripture of the like importance unto that before named is 2 Thess. ii. 13, 14, "God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth: whereunto he called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ." First, The same *fountain* of all spiritual and eternal mercy with that mentioned in the other place is here also expressed; and that is, God's choosing of us by an everlasting act, or designing us to the end intended by a free, eternal, unchangeable purpose of his will. Secondly, The *end* aimed at by the Lord in that purpose is here more clearly set down in a twofold expression:—1. Salvation: Verse 13, "God hath chosen you to salvation." That is the thing which he aimed to accomplish for them, and the end he intended to bring them to in his choosing of them. And, 2. Verse 14, "The glory of the Lord Jesus Christ," or the obtaining a portion in that glory which Christ purchased and procured for them, with their being with him to behold his glory. And, thirdly, You have the *means* whereby God will certainly bring about and accomplish this his design and purpose, whereof there are three most eminent acts expressed:—1. Vocation, or their calling by the gospel, verse 14; 2. Sanctification, "Through sanctification of the Spirit;" and, 3. Justification, which they receive by "belief of the truth," verse 13. This much, then, is wrapped up in

this text: God having, in his unchangeable purpose, fore-appointed his to salvation and glory, certainly to be obtained, through the effectual working of the Spirit and free justification in the blood of Christ, it cannot be but that they shall be preserved unto the enjoyment of what they are so designed unto.

To sum up what hath been spoken from these purposes of God to the establishment of the truth we have in hand: Those whom God hath purposed by effectual means to preserve to the enjoyment of eternal life and glory in his favour and acceptation, can never so fall from his love, or be so cast out of his grace, as to come short of the end designed, or ever be totally rejected of God. The truth of this proposition depends upon what hath been said, and may farther be insisted on, concerning the unchangeableness and absoluteness of the eternal purposes of God, the glory whereof men shall never be able sacrilegiously to rob him of. Thence the assumption is, concerning all true believers and truly sanctified persons, there are purposes of God that they shall be so preserved to such ends, etc., as hath been abundantly proved by an induction of particular instances; and therefore it is impossible they should ever be so cast out of the favour of God as not to be infallibly preserved to the end. Which is our second demonstration of the truth in hand.

CHAPTER IV.

THE ARGUMENT FROM THE COVENANT OF GRACE.

An entrance into the consideration of the covenant of grace, and our argument from thence for the unchangeableness of the love of God unto believers—The intendment of the ensuing discourse—Gen. xvii. 7 opened and explained, with the confirmation of the argument in hand from thence—That argument vindicated and cleared of objections—Confirmed by some observations—Jer. xxxii. 38–40 compared with chap. xxxi. 31–34—The truth under consideration from thence clearly confirmed—The certainty, immutability, and infallible accomplishment, of all the promises of the new covenant demonstrated: 1. From the removal of all causes of alteration; 2. From the Mediator and his undertaking therein; 3. From the faithfulness of God—One instance from the former considerations—The endeavour of Mr G. to answer our argument from this place—His observation on and from the text considered—1. This promise not made to the Jews only, 2. Nor to all the nation of the Jews, proved from Rom. xi. 7; not intending principally their deliverance from Babylon—His inferences from his former observations weighed—1. The promise made to the body of the people of the Jews typically only; 2. An exposition borrowed of Socinus rejected; 3. The promise not appropriated to the time of the captivity, and the disadvantage ensuing to Mr G.'s cause upon such an exposition—The place insisted on compared with Ezek. xi. 17–20—That place cleared—A fourth objection answered—This promise always fulfilled—The spiritual part of it accomplished during the captivity—God's intention not frustrated—How far the civil prosperity of the Jews was con-

cerned in this promise—Promises of spiritual and temporal things compared —The covenant of grace how far conditional—Mr G.'s sense of this place expressed—Borrowed from Faustus Socinus—The inconsistency of it with the mind of the Holy Ghost demonstrated, also with what himself hath elsewhere delivered—No way suited to be the answer of our argument from the place —The same interpretation farther disproved—An immediate divine efficacy held out in the words—Conversion and pardon of sins promised—Differenced from the grace and promises of the old covenant—Contribution of means put by Mr G. in the place of effectual operation of the thing itself, farther disproved—How, when, and to whom this promise was fulfilled, farther declared—An objection arising upon that consideration answered—Conjectures ascribed to God by Mr G.—The real foundation of all divine predictions— The promise utterly enervated, and rendered of none effect by Mr G.'s exposition—Its consistency with the prophecies of the rejection of the Jews—The close of the argument from the covenant of grace.

HAVING shown the unchangeable stability of the love and favour of God towards his saints from the immutability of his own *nature* and *purposes*, manifested by an induction of sundry particular instances from eminent places of Scripture, wherein both the one and the other are held out as the foundation of what we affirm, I proceed to farther clear and demonstrate the same important truth from the first way of declaration whereby God hath assured them that it shall be to them according to the tenor of the proposition insisted on; and that is his *covenant of grace*. The *principium essendi* of this truth, if I may so say, is in the decrees and purposes of God; the *principium cognoscendi*, in his covenant, promise, and oath, which also add much to the real stability of it, the truth and faithfulness of God in them being thereby peculiarly engaged therein.

It is not in my purpose to handle the nature of the covenant of grace, but only briefly to look into it, so far as it hath influence into the truth in hand. The covenant of grace, then, as it inwraps the unchangeable love and favour of God towards those who are taken into the bond thereof, is that which lieth under our present consideration. The other great branch of it (upon the account of the same faithfulness of God), communicating permanency or perseverance in itself unto the saints, securing their continuance with God, shall, the Lord assisting, more peculiarly be explained when we arrive to the head of our discourse, unless enough to that purpose may fall in occasionally in the progress of this business.

For our present purpose, the producing and vindicating of one or two texts of Scripture, being unavoidably expressive towards the end aimed at, shall suffice

The first of these is Gen. xvii. 7, "I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee." This is that which God engageth himself unto in this covenant of grace, that he will for everlasting be a God to him and

his faithful seed. Though the external administration of the covenant was given to Abraham and his carnal seed, yet the effectual dispensation of the grace of the covenant is peculiar to them only who are the children of the promise, the remnant of Abraham according to election, with all that in all nations were to be blessed in him and in his seed, Christ Jesus. Ishmael, though circumcised, was to be put out, and not to be heir with Isaac, nor to abide in the house for ever, as the son of the promise was, Gal. iv. 22, 23, 30. Now, the apostle tells you, look what blessings faithful Abraham received by virtue of this promise, the same do all believers receive: Chap. iii. 9, "They which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham;" which he proves (in the words foregoing) from Gen. xii. 3, because all nations were to be blessed in him. What blessing, then, was it that was here made over to Abraham? All the blessings that from God are conveyed in and by his seed, Jesus Christ (in whom both he and we are blessed), are inwrapped therein. What they are the apostle tells you, Eph. i. 3; they are "all spiritual blessings." If perseverance, if the continuance of the love and favour of God towards us, be a spiritual blessing, both Abraham and all his seed, all faithful ones throughout the world, are blessed with it in Jesus Christ; and if God's continuing to be a God to them for ever will enforce this blessing (being but the same thing in another expression), it is here likewise asserted.

It is importunately excepted, "That though God undertake to be our God in an everlasting covenant, and upon that account to bless us with the whole blessing that is conveyed by the promised seed, yet if we abide not with him, if we forsake him, he will also cease to be our God, and cease to bless us with the blessing which on others in Jesus Christ he will bestow."

Ans. If there be a necessity to smite this evasion so often as we shall meet with it, it must be cut into a hundred pieces. For the present, I shall only observe two evils it is attended withal:—First, It takes no notice that God, who hath undertaken to be a God unto us, hath, with the like truth, power, and faithfulness, undertaken that we shall abide to be his people. So is his love in his covenant expressed by its efficacy to this end and purpose, Deut. xxx. 6, "The LORD thy God will circumcise thine heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, that thou mayest live." Secondly, It denies the continuance of the love of God to us to the end to be any part of the blessings wherewith we are blessed in Jesus Christ; for if it be, it could no more be suspended on any condition in us than the glorification of believers that abide so to the end.

This, then, is inwrapped in this promise of the covenant unto the elect, with whom it is established: God will be a God to them for

ever, and that to bless them with all the blessings which he communicates in and by the Lord Jesus Christ, the promised seed. The continuance of his favour to the end is to us unquestionably a spiritual blessing (if any one be otherwise minded, I shall not press to share with him in his apprehension); and if so, it is in Christ, and shall certainly be enjoyed by them to whom God is a God in covenant. He that can suppose that he shall prevail with the saints of God to believe it will make for their consolation to apprehend that there is no engagement in his covenant, assuring them of the continuance of the favour of God unto them to the end of their pilgrimage, hath no reason to doubt or question the issue of any thing he shall undertake to persuade men unto. Doubtless he will find it very difficult with them who, in times of spiritual straits and pressures, have closed with this engagement of God in the covenant, and have had experience of its bearing them through all perplexities and entanglements, when the waves of temptation were ready to go over their souls. Certainly David was in another persuasion when, upon a view of all the difficulties he had passed through, and his house was to meet withal, he concludes, 2 Sam. xxiii. 5, "God hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure: this is all my salvation, and all my desire." The covenant from whence he had his sure mercies, not changeable, not alterable, not liable to failings, as the temporal prosperity of his house was, was that he rejoiced in.

I shall close this with two observations:—

First, It *may*, doubtless, and on serious consideration *will*, seem strange to any one acquainted in the least measure with God and his faithfulness, that, in a covenant established in the blood of Christ, he should freely promise to his that he would be *a God unto them*, —that is, that he would abide with them in the power, goodness, righteousness, and faithfulness, of a God, that he would be an all-sufficient God to them for ever,—yet, when he might with an almighty facility prevent it, and so answer and fulfil his engagement to the utmost, he should suffer them to become such villains and devils in wickedness that it should be utterly impossible for him, in the blood of his Son and the riches of his grace, to continue a God unto them; this, I say, seemeth strange to me, and not to be received without casting the greatest reproach imaginable on the goodness, faithfulness, and righteousness, of God.

Secondly, If this promise be not absolute, immutable, unchangeable, independent on any thing in us, it is impossible that any one should plead it with the Lord, but only upon the account of the sense that he hath of his own accomplishment of the *condition* on which the promise doth depend. I can almost suppose that the whole generation of believers will rise up against this assertion to

remove it out of their way of walking with God. This I know, that most of them who at any time have walked in darkness and have had no light will reprove it to the faces of them that maintain it, and profess that God hath witnessed the contrary truth to their hearts.[1] Are we, in the covenant of grace, left to our own hearts, ways, and walkings? Is it not differenced from that which is abolished? Is it not the great distinguishing character of it that all the promises of it are stable, and shall certainly be accomplished in Jesus Christ?[2]

One place I shall add more, wherein our intendment is positively expressed, beyond all possibility of any colourable evasion, especially considering the explication, enlargement, and application, which in other places it hath received. The place intended is Jer. xxxii. 38–40, "They shall be my people, and I will be their God: and I will give them one heart, and one way, that they may fear me for ever, for the good of them, and of their children after them: and I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them, to do them good; but I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me;"—in conjunction with these words, of the same importance, chap. xxxi. 31–34, "Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers: but this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more."

First, The thesis under demonstration is directly and positively affirmed, in most significant and emphatical words, by God himself. Seeing, then, the testimony of his holy prophets and apostles concerning him are so excepted against and so lightly set by, let us try if men will reverence himself, and cease contending with him when he appeareth in judgment. Saith he, then, to believers, those whom he taketh into covenant with him: "This is my covenant with you" (in the performance whereof his all-sufficiency, truth, and faithfulness, with all other his glorious attributes, are eminently engaged), "I will be your God" (what that expression intends is known, and the Lord here explains, by instancing in some eminent spiritual mercies thence flowing, as sanctification, and acceptance with him by the forgiveness of sins), "and that for ever, in an everlasting covenant, and I will

[1] Ps. lxxiii. 26; Isa. viii. 17, l. 10. [2] 2 Cor. i. 20; Heb. vii. 22, viii. 7–9.

not turn away from you to do you good." This plainly God saith of himself, and this is all we say of him in the business, and which (having so good an author) we must say, whether men will hear or whether they will forbear. Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto men more than unto God, let all judge. Truly they have a sad task, in my apprehension, who are forced to sweat and labour to alleviate and take off the testimony of God.

Secondly, That the way the Lord proposeth to secure his love to his is upon terms of advantage, of glory and honour to himself, to take away all scruple which on that hand might arise, is fully also expressed. Sin is the only differencing thing between God and man; and hereinto it hath a double influence:—First, *Moral*, in its guilt, deserving that God should cast off a sinner, and prevailing with him, upon the account of justice, so to do. Secondly, *Efficient*, by causing men, through its power and deceitfulness, to depart from God, until, as backsliders in heart, they are filled with their own ways.[1] Take away these two, provide for security on this hand, and there is no possible case imaginable of separation between God and man once brought together in peace and unity. For both these doth God here undertake. For the first, saith he, "I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more," chap. xxxi. 34. The guilt of sin shall be done away in Christ, and that on terms of the greatest honour and glory to the justice of God that can be apprehended: "God hath set forth Christ to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past," Rom. iii. 25. And for the latter, that that may be thoroughly prevented, saith God, "The care shall lie on me; 'I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts,'" chap. xxxi. 33; "I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me," chap. xxxii. 40. So that the continuance of his love is secured against all possible interveniences whatever, by an assured prevention of all such as have an inconsistency therewithal.

The apostle Paul, setting out the covenant which God ratified in the blood of Christ, which shall never be broken, takes the description of it from this place of the prophet, Heb. viii. 9–12; and therein fixeth particularly on the unchangeableness of it, in opposition to the covenant which went before, which was liable to mutation, when if these differed only in the approbation of several qualifications, they come to the same end; for if this covenant depend on conditions by ourselves and in our own strength, with the advantage of its proposal to us, attended with exhortations, and therefore by us to be fulfilled, how was it distinguished from that made with the people when they came out of Egypt? But in this very thing the difference of it lieth, as the apostle asserts, verses 6–8. The immutability of this covenant,

[1] Heb. iii. 13; Prov. i. 31, xiv. 14.

and the certain product of all the mercy promised in it might, were that our present task, be easily demonstrated; as,—

First, From the removal of all causes of alteration. When two enter into covenant and agreement, no one can undertake that that covenant shall be firm and stable if it equally depend upon both; yea both, it may be, are changeable, and so actually changed before the accomplishing of the thing engaged about therein: however, though the one should be faithful, yet the other may fail, and so the covenant be broken. Thus it was with God and Adam. It could not be undertaken that that covenant should be kept inviolable, because though God continues faithful, yet Adam might prove (as indeed he did) faithless; and so the covenant was disannulled, as to any power of knitting together God and man. [Thus it is with] the covenant between husband and wife; the one party cannot undertake that the whole covenant shall be observed, because the other may prove treacherous. In this covenant the case is otherwise. God himself hath undertaken the whole, both for his continuing with us and our continuing with him. Now, he is one, God is one, and there is not another, that they should fail and disannul this agreement. Though there be sundry persons in covenant, yet there is but one undertaker on all hands, and that is God himself. It doth not depend upon the will of another, but of him only who is faithful, who cannot lie, who cannot deceive, who will make all his engagements good to the utmost. He is an all-sufficient one; "he will work, and who shall let him?" "The LORD of hosts hath purposed, and who shall disannul it?" Yea, he is an unchangeable one; what he undertakes shall come to pass. Blessed be his name that he hath not laid the foundation of a covenant in the blood of his dear Son, laid out the riches of his wisdom, grace, and power about it, and then left it to us and our frail will to carry it on, that it should be in our power to make void the great work of his mercy! Whence, then, I say, should any change be, the whole depending on one, and him immutable?

Secondly, Seeing that God and man, having been at so great a distance as they were by sin, must needs meet in some *mediator*, some middle person, in whom and by whose blood (as covenants usually were confirmed by blood) this covenant must be ratified, consider who this is, and what he hath done for the establishing of it: "There is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus," 1 Tim. ii. 5. He is the "surety of this testament," Heb. vii. 22; the "mediator of this better covenant, established upon better promises," chap. viii. 6. Neither is this surety or mediator subject to change; he is "the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever," chap. xiii. 8. But though he be so in himself, yet is the work so that is committed to him? Saith the apostle, "All the promises of God in him are yea, and in him Amen, unto the glory

of God by us," 2 Cor. i. 20. God hath in him and by him ascertained all the promises of the covenant, that not one of them should be broken, disannulled, frustrated, or come short of an accomplishment. God hath so confirmed them in him, that he hath at his death made a legacy of them, and bequeathed them in a testamentary dispensation to the covenanters, Heb. ix. 15–17. And what he hath farther done for the assurance of his saints' abiding with God shall afterward be declared.

Thirdly, The faithfulness of God is oftentimes peculiarly mentioned in reference to this very thing: "The God which keepeth covenant" is his name. That which he hath to keep is all that in covenant he undertaketh. Now, in this covenant he undertaketh,—first, That he will never forsake us; secondly, That we shall never forsake him. His faithfulness is engaged to both these; and if either part should fail, what would the Lord do to his great name, "The God which keepeth covenant?"

Notwithstanding the undertaking of God on *both sides* in this covenant; notwithstanding his faithfulness in the performance of what he undertaketh; notwithstanding the ratification of it in the blood of Jesus, and all that he hath done for the confirmation of it; notwithstanding its differing from the covenant that was disannulled on this account, that that was broken, which this shall never be (that being broken not as to the truth of the proposition wherein it is contained, "Do this and live," but as to the success of it in bringing any to God); notwithstanding the seal of the oath that God set unto it,—they, I say, who, notwithstanding all these things, will hang the unchangeableness of this covenant of God upon the slipperiness, and uncertainty, and lubricity of the will of man, "let them walk in the light of the sparks which themselves have kindled;" we will walk in the light of the Lord our God.

When first I perused Mr Goodwin's exceptions to this testimony, chap. x. sect. 52–56, pp. 219–224, finding them opposed not so much nor so directly to our inference from this place as to the design, intendment, and arguing of the apostle, Rom. ix.–xi., and to the reenforcing of the objections by him answered, casting again the "rock of offence" in the way by him removed, I thought to have passed it without any reply, being not convinced that it was possible for the author himself to be satisfied either with his own exposition of this place or his exceptions unto ours; but arriving at length to the close of his discourse, I found him "quasi re preclarè gestâ," to triumph in his victory, expressing much confidence that the world of saints, who have hitherto bottomed much of their faith and consolation on the covenant of God in these words expressed, will vail their faith and understanding to his uncontrollable dictates, and not once make mention of the name of God in this place any more. Truly, for my

part, I must take the boldness to say that, before the coming forth of his learned treatise, I had read, and, according to my weak ability, weighed and considered, whatever either Arminians or Socinians (from the founder of which sect their and his interpretation of this place is borrowed) had entered against the interpretation insisted on, that I could by any means attain the sight of, and was not in the least shaken by any of their reasonings from rejoicing in the grace of God, as to the unchangeableness of his love to believers, and the certainty of their perseverance with him to the end, therein expressed; and I must add, that I am not one jot enamoured of their objections and reasonings, for all the new dress which, with some cost, our author hath been pleased to furnish them with, fashionably to set out themselves withal. Were it not for the confidence you express, in the close of your discourse, of your noble exploits and achievements in the consideration of this text (which magnificent thoughts of your undertaking and success I could not imagine from the reading of your arguments or exceptions, though on other accounts I might), I should not have thought it worth while to examine it particularly; which now, to safeguard the consolation of the weakest believers, and to encourage them to hold fast their confidence, so well established, against the assaults of all adversaries, Satan or Arminians, I shall briefly do:—

1. Then, saith Mr Goodwin, "Evident it is, from the whole tenor of the chapter, that the words contain especial promises, made particularly to the Jews."

Ans. If by *particularly* you mean *exclusively*, to them and not to others, this is evidently false; for the apostle tells you, Heb. viii. 6, to the end of the chapter, that the covenant here mentioned is that whereof Christ is mediator, and the promise of it those better promises which they are made partakers of who have an interest in his mediation.

2. He saith, "As evident it is, upon the same account, that the promise here mentioned was not made only to the saints or sound believers amongst the Jews, who were but few, but to the whole body or generality of them."

Ans. True, it is as evident as what before you affirmed, and that in the same kind,—that is, it is evidently false, or else the promise itself is so, for it was never fulfilled towards them all. But I refer you to a learned author, who hath long since assoiled this difficulty, and taught us to distinguish between a Jew ἐν τῷ φανερῷ and a Jew ἐν τῷ κρυπτῷ, of Israel according to "the flesh" and according to "the promise." He hath also taught us that "they are not all Israel that are of Israel," Rom. ii. 28, 29, ix. 6, 7. And upon that account it is that the word of this promise doth not fail, though all "of Israel" do not enjoy the fruit of it;—not that it is conditional, but that

it was not at all made unto them, as to the spiritual part of it, to whom it was not wholly fulfilled. And chap. xi. 7, he tells you that it was "the election" to whom these promises were made, and they obtained the fruit of them; neither doth that appendix of promises pointed to look any other way. When you have made good your observation by a reply to that learned author, we shall think of a rejoinder. It is therefore added,—

3. "It is yet, upon the same account, as evident as either of the former that this promise was made unto this nation of the Jews when and whilst they were (or at least considered as now being) in the iron furnace of the Babylonian captivity, verse 23."

Ans. That this solemn renovation of this promise of the covenant was not made to them when in Babylon, but given out to them beforehand, to sustain their hearts and spirits withal, in their bondage and thraldom, is granted. And what then, I pray? Is it any new thing to have spiritual promises solemnly given out and renewed upon the occasion of temporal distresses? A promise of Christ is given out to the house of David when in fear of being destroyed, Isa. vii. 13, 14; so it was given to Adam, Gen. iii. 15; so to Abraham, Gen. xvii.; so to the church, Isa. iv. 2–6. But farther it is said,—

4. "From the words immediately preceding the passages offered to debate, it clearly appears that the promise in these passages relates unto and concerns their reduction and return from and out of that captivity into their own land."

Ans. Will Mr Goodwin say that it doth only concern that? Dareth any man so boldly contradict the apostle, setting out from this very place the tenor of the covenant of grace, ratified in the blood of Christ? Heb. viii. 7–12. Nay, will any say that so much of the promise here as God calleth his covenant, chap. xxxi. 33, 34, xxxii. 38–40, doth at all concern their reduction into their own land any farther than it was a type or resemblance of our deliverance by Christ? These evident assertions are as express and flat contradictions to the evident intendment of the Holy Ghost as any man is able to invent. But,—

Mr Goodwin hath many deductions out of the former "sure and evident" premises, to prove that this is not a promise of absolute and final perseverance (it is a strange perseverance that is not final!) in grace to the end of their lives; for, saith he,—

1. "The promise is made to the body of the people, and not to the saints and believers among them, and respects as well the unfaithful as the believers in that nation."

Ans. It was made to "the body of the people" only *typically* considered, and so it was accomplished to the body of the people; *spiritually* and *properly* to the elect among the people, who, as the apostle tells us, obtained accordingly, there being also in the pro-

mise wrapped up the grace of effectual conversion. It may in some sense be said to be made to the "unfaithful,"—that is, to such as were so antecedently to the grace thereof,—but not to any that abide so; for the promise is, not that they shall not, but that they shall believe, and continue in so doing to the end. But, saith he,—

2. "This promise was appropriated and fitted to the state of the Jews in a sad captivity; but the promise of perseverance was, if our adversaries might be believed, a standing promise among them, not appropriated to their condition."

Ans. 1. "Non venit ex pharetris ista sagitta tuis." It is Socinus', in reference to Ezek. xxxvi., in Præl. Theol. cap. xii. sect. 6; and so is the whole interpretation of the place afterward insisted on derived to Mr Goodwin through the hands of the Remonstrants at the Hague conference. 2. If this exception against the testimony given in these words for the confirmation of the thesis in hand may be allowed, what will become of Mr Goodwin's argument from Ezek. xviii. for the apostasy of the saints? It is most certain the words from thence by him and others insisted on, with the whole discourse of whose contexture they are a part, are appropriated to a peculiar state of the Jews, and are brought forth as a meet vindication of the righteousness of God in his dealing with them in that condition. This, then, may be laid up in store to refresh Mr Goodwin with something of his own providing, when we are gone so far onward in our journey. But, 3. It is most evident to all the world that Mr Goodwin is not such a stranger in the Scriptures as not to have observed long since that spiritual promises are frequently given to the people of God to support their souls under temporal distresses; and that not always new promises for the matter of them (for indeed the substance of all promises is comprised in the first promise of Christ), but either such as enlarge and clear up grace formerly given or promised, or such as have need of a solemn renewal for the establishing of the faith of the saints, assaulted in some particular manner in reference to them, which was the state of the saints among the Jews at this time. How often was the same promise renewed to Abraham! and upon what several occasions! and yet that promise, for the matter of it, was the same that had been given from the beginning of the world. That God's solemn renewal of the covenant at any time is called his making of or entering into covenant needs no labour to prove. But, saith he,—

3. "This promise is the same with that of Ezek. xi. 17–20; which promise notwithstanding, it is said, verse 21, 'But as for them whose heart walketh after the heart of their detestable things, and their abominations, I will recompense their way upon their heads:' so that notwithstanding this seeming promise, as is pretended, of perseverance in grace, they may walk after their abominable things; for

this threatening intends the same persons or nation (as Calvin himself confesseth), the Israelites."

Ans. 1. Grant that this is *the same promise* with the other, how will it appear that this is not a promise of such an interposure of the Spirit and grace of God as shall infallibly produce the effect of perseverance? "Why, because some are threatened for following the heart of their abominable things." Yea, but how shall it appear that they are the same persons with them to whom the promise is made? The context is plainly against it. Saith He, "I will give them a heart to walk in my statutes and ordinances, to do them; but for them that walk after their own hearts, them I will destroy," in as clear a distinction of the object of the promise and threatening as is possible. Saith Mr Goodwin, "This threatening concerns the same persons or nation." The same nation, but not the same persons in that nation. "But Calvin saith that concerning the Israelites." But Paul hath told us that "they are not all Israel who are of Israel, not all children of the promise who are children of the flesh." And,—

2. If it do any way concern the persons to whom that promise is given, it is an expression suited to the dispensation of God whereby he carrieth believers on in the enjoyment of the good things he gives them in and by his promises, without the least prediction of any event, being only declarative of what the Lord abhorreth, and of the connection that is between the antecedent and the consequent of the axiom wherein it is contained, and is far from the nature of those promises which hold out the purpose or intention of God, with the engaging of a real efficacy for their accomplishment. He adds,—

4. "If this be a promise of absolute perseverance, no time nor season can be imagined wherein it was fulfilled."

Ans. At all times and seasons to them to whom it was made, according to their concernment in it. But saith he,—

(1.) "It hath been proved that it was made to the community of the Jewish nation, towards whom it was not fulfilled."

Ans. (1.) It hath been *said*, indeed, again and again, but scarce once attempted to be *proved*, nor the reasoning of the apostle against some pretended proofs and answers to them at all removed. (2.) It was fulfilled to the body of that nation, as far as it concerned the body of that nation, in their typical return from their captivity. But then,—

(2.) "If this be the sense, it was fulfilled in the captivity as well as afterward, for you say the saints always persevere."

Ans. (1.) The typical part of it was not then accomplished. (2.) It is granted that as to the spiritual part of the covenant of grace, it was at all times fulfilled to them, which is now evidently promised to establish them in the assurance thereof. Wherefore it is,—

5. Argued, sect. 53, (1.) "That these words, 'I will give them one heart, that they *shall* not depart from me,' may be as well rendered, 'That they *may* not depart from me;' and so it is said in the verse foregoing, 'That they *may* fear me for ever.'"

Ans. Suppose the words may be thus rendered, what inconvenience will ensue? Either way they evidently and beyond exception design out the end aimed at by God; and when God intends an end or event, so as to exert a real efficacy for the compassing of it, to say that it shall not be infallibly brought about is an assertion that many have not as yet had the boldness to venture on. But saith he,—

(2.) "The words so read do not necessarily import the actual event or taking place of the effect intended of God in the promise, and his performance thereof, but only his intention itself in both these, and the sufficiency of the means allowed for producing such an effect: but it is of the same nature with that that our Saviour saith, John v. 34, 'These things I say unto you, that ye might be saved;' and that of God to Adam, Gen. iii. 10, 11." All which things were in like manner insisted on by the Remonstrants at the Hague colloquy.

Ans. It is not amiss that our contests about the sense of this place of Scripture are at length come to the state and issue here expressed. It is granted the thing promised, and that according to the intendment of God, is perseverance; but that there is any necessity that this promise of God should be fulfilled or his intention accomplished, that is denied. Were it not that I should prevent myself in what will be more seasonable to be handled when we come to the consideration of the promises of God, I should very willingly engage here into the proof of this assertion. When God purposeth or intendeth an event, and promiseth to do it, to that end putting forth and exercising an efficient real power, it shall certainly be accomplished and brought to pass; neither can this be denied without casting the greatest reproach of mutability, impotency, and breach of word, upon the Most Holy, that is possible for any man to do. Neither do the Remonstrants nor Mr Goodwin acquit themselves from a participation in so high a crime by their instance of Gen. iii. 10, 11, where a command of God is only related to express his duty to whom it was given, not in the least asserting any intention of God about the event, or promise as to the means of its accomplishment. Nor doth that of John viii. 28 give them any more assistance in their sad undertaking to alleviate the truth of God. A means of salvation in its own nature and kind sufficient is exhibited, which asserts not an infallible necessity of event, as that doth which in this place is ascribed to God. But it is added,—

6. Sect. 54, "The continuance of external and civil prosperity to the Jewish nation may much more colourably be argued from hence than the certainty of their perseverance in grace; for these

things are most expressly promised, verses 39, 40, and yet we find that, upon their non-performance of the condition, they are become the most contemptible and miserable nation under heaven. Certainly, then, the spiritual promises here must also depend on conditions, which if not fulfilled, they also may come short of performance."

Ans. 1. Rom. xi. 25–27. 2. These temporal promises were fulfilled unto them so far as they were made to them,—that is, as they were typical,—and what is behind of them shall be made good in due time. 3. All these promises are, and were, in their chiefest and most eminent concernments (even the spiritual things set forth by allusions to the good land wherein they lived), completely and absolutely fulfilled to them, all and every one, to whom they were properly and directly made, as the apostle abundantly proveth, Rom. ix.–xi. 4. Whereas there are two special spiritual promises here expressed, one of *conversion*, the other of *perseverance*, I desire to know on what condition their accomplishment is suspended? On what condition will God write his law in their hearts? "On condition they hear him and obey him, suffer his mercies and kindnesses to work kindly on them." That is, on condition his law be in their hearts, he will write it there! Thanks yet for that! On what condition doth God promise that they shall abide with him for ever? "Why, on the condition they depart not from him." Very good! To what end doth God promise that which he will not effect, but only on condition that there is no need for him so to do! But, saith he,—

7. "If the spiritual promises be absolute, so must the temporal be also; for their accomplishing depends solely on the things mentioned and promised in the spiritual."

Ans. 1. Temporal things in the promises are often expressed only to be a resemblance, and to set off some eminent spiritual grace intended, as shall afterward appear. In that sense the promises mentioning such things are actually and fully accomplished in the collation of the spiritual things by them typed and resembled. 2. Temporal promises, as such, belong not primarily to the covenant of grace, as they are of temporal things for the substance of them, but to the covenant with that whole nation about their inheritance in the land of Canaan, which was expressly conditional, and which held out no more of God's intendment to that nation but only that there should be an inviolable connection between their obedience and prosperity. 3. The things in this promise are expressly differenced from the things of that covenant on this account, that that covenant being broken on the part of the nation, they enjoyed not that which was laid out as a fruit of their obedience; but this shall never be violated or broken, God undertaking for the accomplishing of it with another manner of engaging and suitable power exerted than in that of old, Heb. viii. 7–12, x. 16, 17. But, saith he,—

8. "The expression of a 'covenant' plainly shows it to be conditional; for a covenant is not but upon the mutual stipulation of parties; when one fails, then is the other true."

Ans. 1. The word "berith" is sometimes used for a single promise without a condition, Gen. vi. 18, ix. 9; whence the apostle, handling this very promise, changeth the terms and calleth it a "testament." In a *testamentary dispensation* there is not in the nature of it any mutual stipulation required, but only a mere single favour and grant or concession. 2. It may be granted that here is a *stipulation* of duty from us, God promising to work that in us which he requires of us; and hereby is this covenant distinguished from that which was disannulled. In the good things, indeed, of this covenant, one may be the condition of another, but both are freely bestowed of God.

And these are Mr Goodwin's exceptions against this testimony, which cometh in in the cause of God and his saints, that we have in hand. His next attempt is to give you the sense of the words on this consideration, to manifest from thence that this promise of God may come short of accomplishment.

This, then, at length, is the account that is given in of the sense of the promise in hand, and all others of the like nature:—

"'I will give them one heart, and one way, that they may fear me for ever, and will put my fear into their hearts, that they shall not,' or may not, 'depart from me;' that is, 'I will deal so above measure graciously and bountifully with them, as well in matters relating to their spiritual condition as in things concerning their outward condition, that if they be not prodigiously refractory, stubborn, and unthankful, I will overcome their evils with my goodness, and will cause them to own me for their God, and will reduce them as one man to a loving and loyal frame and temper of heart, that they shall willingly, with a free and full purpose of heart, fear and serve me for ever,'" sect. 55.

Ans. The first author of this gloss upon a parallel text was Socinus, Præl. Theol. cap. vi., whose words are: "This place of Ezekiel is well explained by Erasmus in his Diatribe, saying, 'That there is a usual figure of speaking contained in it, whereby a care in any of working something by another is signified, his endeavour being not excluded: as if a master should say to his scholar, speaking improperly, I will take away that barbarous tongue from thee, and give thee the Roman.' These are almost the words of Erasmus. To which add, that it appeareth from the place itself that God would not signify any necessity or any internal efficacy when he declareth that he will effect what he promiseth no other way than by the multitude of his benefits, wherewith he would affect the people and mollify their hearts and minds, and thereby, as it were, beget and create in them a willingness and alacrity in obeying of

him."[1] The Remonstrants received this sense in the conference at the Hague, managing it in these words: "It is manifest that these words do signify some great efficacy and motion, which should come to pass by the many and excellent benefits of God, for whose sake they ought to convert themselves," etc.: which worthy interpretation being at length fallen upon Mr Goodwin's hand, is trimmed forth as you have heard. Secondly, Not to insist on those assumptions which are supposed in this interpretation,—as, that this promise was made peculiarly to the Jews, and to the whole nation of them properly and directly, etc.,—the gloss itself will be found by no means to have the least consistency with either the words or intendment of the Holy Ghost in the place, nor to be suited to answer our argument from thence, nor yet to hold any good intelligence or correspondency with what hath already been delivered concerning it: for,—

1. To begin with the latter, he affirms this cannot be a promise of absolute perseverance, "because if it be so, the Jews enjoyed it in that captivity as well as afterward, when that is here promised which they were not to receive until in and upon their return from Babylon," sect. 52, pp. 220, 221. But if that which is here mentioned be all that is promised to them,—namely, dealing so graciously and bountifully with them in his dispensations, according as was intimated,—there is not any thing in the least held out to them in this place but what God had already (himself being judge) in as eminent and high a manner wrought in reference to them and for them as could be conceived; and indeed it was such as he never after this arose to that height of outward mercy and bounty in things spiritual and temporal so as before, Isa. v. 1, 2, 4. Neither after the captivity unto this day did they see again the triumphant glory of David, the magnificent peace of Solomon, the beauty of the temple, the perfection of ordinances, etc., as before.

2. Whereas he affirmed formerly that "this promise is conditional, and that the things therein promised do depend on conditions by them to be fulfilled to whom the promise is made," sect. 54, p. 221, in the gloss here given us of the words there is no intimation of any such conditions as whereupon the promised actings of God should be suspended, but only an uncertainty of event in reference to these actings asserted. That (according to this interpretation) which alone God promiseth to do is, that "he would deal above measure graciously

[1] "Hunc Ezechielis locum satis commode explicat Erasmus in sua Diatribe, dicens, In eo contineri usitatam figuram loquendi, qua cura in altero aliquid efficiendi significatur, illius opera minime exclusa: ac si quis (inquit) præceptor discipulo solœcizanti diceret, Exeram tibi linguam istam barbaricam, et inseram Romanam. Hæc sunt fere ipsius Erasmi verba. Quibus adde ex loco ipso satis apparere nullam necessitatem Deum significare voluisse, sed neque ullam vim interiorem, cum non alia ratione ea, quæ ibi pollicetur se effecturum, ostendat Deus, quam beneficiorum multitudine, quibus affecturus erat populum, ejusque cor et animum emolliturus," etc.—Soc. Præl. cap. xii. s. 6, p. 45.

and bountifully with them, as well in matters relating to their spiritual condition as in things concerning their outward condition." This is all he promiseth; and this he will absolutely do, be the event what it will. It is not said (nor can it, with any pretence of reason) that this also is conditional; nay, whatever the event and issue be, that God will thus deal with them is the sense of the words in hand, according to the estimate here taken of them. It is true, it is in the exposition under consideration left doubtful and ambiguous whether such or such an event shall follow the promised actings of God or not; but what God promiseth concerning his dealing with them, that, without supposal of any condition whatever, shall be accomplished. According as a sense serves the turn, so it is to be embraced, when men are once engaged against the truth.

3. Neither doth this interpretation so much as take notice of, much less doth it with any strength or evidence waive, our argument for the saints' perseverance from this place. We affirm,—(1.) That the promise God made unto, or the covenant he makes here with, his people, is distinguished from or opposed unto the covenant that was broken, upon this account, that that was broken by the default of them with whom it was made, but God would take care and provide that this should not fail, but be everlasting, Jer. xxxi. 32, xxxii. 40; Heb. viii. 8, 9. (2.) That the intendment of God in this promise, and the administration of this covenant, with means and power mentioned therein, is the abiding of his saints with him, or rather, primarily and principally, his abiding with them, notwithstanding all such interveniences as he will not powerfully prevent from ever interposing to the disturbance of that communion he taketh them into. "I will," saith he, "make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them, to do them good." Now, these things, and such like, are not once taken notice of in the exposition boasted to be full and clear.

4. Neither, indeed, hath it any affinity unto or acquaintance in name or thing with the words or intendment of God, with the grace of the promise, or the promise itself; for,—

(1.) God says he will "give them one heart and one way," or he will "put his law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts;" which is plainly the work of his grace in them, and not the effect and fruit of his dealing with them. In the gloss in hand, the work of God is limited to such dealings with them as may "overcome them" to such a frame. The having of a *new heart* is either the immediate work of God, or it is their yielding unto their duty to him, upon his "dealing bountifully and graciously with them." If the first, it is what the Scripture affirms, and all that we desire; if the latter, how comes it to be expressed in terms holding out an immediate *divine efficiency?* That the taking away of a heart of stone, the giving of a new

heart and spirit, the writing of the law in their hearts, and (which is all one) the quickening of the dead, the opening of blind eyes, the begetting of us anew, as they relate unto God, do signify no more but his administration of means, whereby men may be wrought upon and persuaded to bring their hearts and spirits into such a condition as is described in those expressions, to quicken themselves, to open their blind eyes, etc., Mr Goodwin shall scarce be able to evince.

(2.) *Conversion* and *pardon* of sin being both in this promise of the covenant (I take in also that place of the same importance, chap. xxxi. 33, 34), and relating alike to the grace of God, if conversion, or the giving of a new heart, be done only by administering outward means and persuasions unto men to make them new hearts, *the forgiveness of sins* must also be supposed to be tendered unto them upon the condition that their sins be forgiven, as conversion is on condition they be converted, or do convert themselves.

(3.) This promise being by the prophet and apostle insisted on as containing the grace whereby, eminently and peculiarly, the *new covenant* is distinguished from that which was *abolished*, if the grace mentioned therein be only the laying a powerful and strong obligation on men to duty and obedience, upon the account of the gracious and bountiful dealing of God with them, both as to their temporal and spiritual condition, I desire to know wherein the difference of it from the old covenant, as to the collation of grace, doth consist, and whether ever God made a covenant with man wherein he did not put sufficient obligations of this kind upon him unto obedience; and if so, what are the "better promises" of the new covenant, and what eminent and singular things as to the bestowing of grace are in it; which things here are emphatically expressed to the uttermost.

(4.) The scope of this exposition (which looks but to one part of the promise about bestowing of grace, overlooking the main end and intendment of it, as hath been showed) being to darken the words of the Holy Ghost, so far as to make them represent a *contribution of means* instead of an *effectual working* the end and the event, on which the means supplied have an influence of persuasion to prevail with men to do the things they are afforded them for, I desire to know, First, What new thing is here promised to them which exceeded that mentioned chap. xxv. 4, 5, wherein the Lord testifies that he had granted them formerly a large supply of outward means (and especially of the word) for the end here spoken of. Secondly, To what end and on what account is this administration of means for a work expressed by terms of a real efficiency in reference to the work itself; which, proceeding from the intendment of God for the event aimed at, must needs produce it. And, thirdly, Why these words should not be of the same importance with the associate expression,

which of necessity must be interpreted of an actual and absolute efficiency, Jer. xxxii. 41, 42. And fourthly, Whether the administration of outward sufficient means for the producing of an event can be a ground of an infallible prediction of that event? as God here absolutely saith, "They shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them," chap. xxxi. 34;—which how it is brought about, the Holy Ghost acquaints us, Isa. liv. 13, "All thy children shall be taught of the LORD;" and John vi. 45, "It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me." But Mr Goodwin hath sundry reasons to confirm his gloss, which must also be considered; and he saith,—

1. "That it is the familiar dialect of Scripture to ascribe the doing of things or effects themselves to him that ministers occasions or proper and likely means for the doing of them. So God is said to give them one heart and one way, to put his fear into their hearts, when he administers motives, means, occasions, and opportunities to them, which are proper to work them to such a frame and disposition of heart, out of which men are wont to love and obey him, whether they be ever actually brought thereunto or no; and this promise was fulfilled to the people after their return out of captivity, in the mercies they enjoyed and the preaching of the prophets."

Ans. We are not now to be informed that this is Mr Goodwin's doctrine concerning conversion,—1. That God doth only administer means, motives, and opportunities for it, but that man thereupon converts himself; and, 2. That when God hath done all he will or can, that the event may not follow, nor the work be wrought: but that this sense, by any means or opportunities, can be fastened on the promise under consideration, we are not as yet so well instructed. When God once intendeth an end, and expresseth himself so to do, promising to work really and efficiently for the accomplishing of it, yea, that he will actually do it, by that efficiency preventing all interpositions whatever that may tend to frustrate his design, that that end of his shall not be accomplished, or that that working of his is only an administration of means, whereby men may do the things intended if they will, or may do otherwise (he affirming that he will do them himself), is a doctrine beyond my reach and capacity. His saying that "in this sense the promise was fulfilled to the people after the captivity," is a saying against his own light. He hath told us not long since that it could not be a promise of those things which were enjoyed before it was ever given, as in our sense they did the grace of perseverance, etc. Surely the means he mentioneth (until at least the coming of Christ in the flesh) were advanced to a far higher pitch and eminency on all hands before the captivity than after; and at the coming of Christ

it was eminently fulfilled, in our acceptation of it, unto all to whom it was made. But he adds,—

2. "That if it be not so to be understood, and so said to be fulfilled as above, it is impossible for any one to assign how and when this promise was fulfilled; for,—First, It was made to the whole people, and the fulfilling of it to a few will not confirm the truth of it. Secondly, The elect had no need of it, knowing themselves to be so, and that they should never fall away; so that this is but to make void the glorious promise of God. And, thirdly, To say that it was made to the elect is but to beg the thing in question."

Ans. 1. As far as the body of the people was concerned in it, it was, and shall be in the latter days, absolutely accomplished towards them. It was, it is, and shall be, fulfilled to all to whom it was made, if so be that God be faithful and cannot deny himself. 2. It was, it is, and shall be, accomplished properly and directly to all the elect of that nation, to whom it was so made, as it hath been cleared already from Rom. ix.–xi., where the apostle, expressly and *datâ operâ*, answers the very objection that Mr Goodwin makes about the accomplishing of these promises, concerning the hardening and rejection of the greatest part of that people, affirming it to consist in this, that the "election obtained when the rest were hardened;" wherein he did not beg the question, though he digged not for it, but answered by clear distinctions, as you may see, Rom. ix. 6, xi. 1, 2, 7. 3. Neither do all the elect after their calling know themselves to be so, nor have they any other way to become acquainted with their election but by their faith in the promises: nor is it spoken like one acquainted with the course and frame of God's dealing with his saints, or with their spirits in walking with God, who supposeth the solemn and clear renovation of promises concerning the same things, with explanations and enlargements of the grace of them, to confirm and establish the communion between the one and the other, to be needless. And who make the promises of God void and of no effect?—we who profess the Lord to be faithful in every one of them, and that no one tittle of them shall fall to the ground or come short of accomplishment; or Mr Goodwin, who reports the grace mentioned in them, for the most part, to come short of producing the effect for which it is bestowed, and the engagements of God in them to depend so upon the lubricity of the wills of men, that mostly they are not made good in the end aimed at? The Lord will judge. But it is farther argued,—

3. "That the Scripture many times asserts the futurity or coming to pass of things not yet in being, not only when the coming of them to pass is certainly known, but when it is probable, upon the account of the means used for the bringing them to pass; for God saith in the parable, 'They will reverence my Son,' Mark xii. 6, and yet the

event was contrary. So upon the executing an offender, he saith, 'The people shall hear and fear, and do no more presumptuously;' which yet might not have its effect on all. So God saith, 'I will give them one heart;' not out of any certainty of knowledge or determination in himself that any such heart or way should actually be given them, which would infallibly produce the effect mentioned, but that he would grant such means as were proper to create such a heart in them."

Ans. 1. The nearer the bottom the more sour the lees. First, Doth God foretell the coming to pass of things future upon a probable conjecture, which is here assigned to him? Is that the intendment of the expression in the parable, "They will reverence my Son." Or was he mistaken in the event, the thing falling out contrary to his expectation? Or is there any thing in this, or the place mentioned, Deut. xvii. 12, 13, but only an expression of the duty of men upon the account of the means offered? Is there any the least intimation of any *intent* and purpose of God as to the events insisted on? any *promise* of his effectual working for the accomplishing of them? any *prediction* upon the account of his purpose and design, which are the foundation of all his predictions? Or is there any the least correspondency in name or thing between the places now instanced in and called in for relief with that under consideration? This, then, is the sinew of Mr Goodwin's arguing in this place: "Sometimes when there are means offered men for the performance of a duty, the accomplishment of it is spoken of as of what ought to have succeeded; and it is the fault of men to whom that duty is prescribed and these means indulged if it come not to pass; therefore, when God purposeth and promiseth to work and bring about such and such a thing, and engageth himself to a real efficiency in it, yet it may come to pass or it may not,—it may be accomplished, or God may fail in his intendment." 2. The sense here given to the promise of God, "I will give them one heart," etc., hath been formerly taken into consideration, and it hath been made to appear that, notwithstanding all the glorious expressions of God's administration of means to work men into the frame intimated, yet, upon the matter, the intendment of the exposition given amounts to this: "Though God saith he will give us a new heart, yet indeed he doth *not* so give it to any one in the world, nor ever intended to do so; but this new heart men must create, make, and work out themselves, upon the means afforded them, which, being very eminent, are said to create such hearts in them, though they do it not, but only persuade men thereunto." A comment this is not much unlike the first that ever was made upon the words of God, Gen. iii. 5! Whether God or man create the new heart is the matter here in question.

For what he lastly affirms, "That if this be a promise of absolute perseverance, it is inconsistent with all the prophecies of the rejection of the Jews, which are accordingly fulfilled," I must refer him to St Paul, who hath long ago undertaken to answer this objection; from whom if he receive not satisfaction, what am I that I should hope to afford the least unto him?

And these are the reasonings upon the account whereof Mr Goodwin dischargeth this text of Scripture, by virtue of his autocratorical power in deciding controversies of this nature, from bearing testimony in this cause any more. Whether he will be attended unto herein time will show. Many attempts to the same purpose have formerly been made, and yet it endureth the trial.

I have thus turned aside to the consideration of the exceptions given in to the ordinary interpretation of this place, lest any should think that they were waived upon the account of their strength and efficacy to overthrow it. The argument I intended from the words, for the stability of God's love and favour to believers upon the account of his covenant engagement, is not once touched in any of them. These words, then, yield a third demonstration of the steadfastness and unchangeableness of acceptation of believers in Christ, upon the account of the absolute stability of that covenant of grace whereof God's engagement to be their God and never to forsake them is an eminent portion.

CHAPTER V.

ARGUMENT FROM THE PROMISES OF GOD.

Entrance into the argument from the promises of God, with their stability and his faithfulness in them—The usual exceptions to this argument—A general description of gospel promises—Why and on what account called gospel promises—The description given general, not suited to any single promise—They are free, and that they are so proved, all flowing from the first great promise of giving a Redeemer—How they are discoveries of God's good-will; how made to sinners—Consequential promises made also to believers—Given in and through Christ in a covenant of grace—Their certainty upon the account of the engagement of the truth and faithfulness of God in them—Of the main matter of these promises, Christ and the Spirit—Of particular promises, all flowing from the same love and grace—Observations on the promises of God, subservient to the end intended—1. They are all true and faithful; the ground of the assertion—2. Their accomplishment always certain, not always evident—3. All conditional promises made good, and how—4. The promises of perseverance of two sorts—5. All promises of our abiding with God in faith and obedience absolute—The vanity of imposing conditions on them discovered—6. Promises of God's abiding with us not to be separated from promises of our abiding with him—7. That they do not properly depend on any condition in believers demonstrated—Instances of this assertion given—8. Making them conditional renders them void as to the ends for which they are given—Given to persons, not to qualifications—The argument from the

promises of God stated—Mr G.'s exceptions against the first proposition cleared, and his objections answered—The promises of God always fulfilled—Of the promise made to Paul, Acts xxvii. 24, etc.—Good men make good their promises to the utmost of their abilities—The promise made to Paul absolute and of infallible accomplishment—Of the promise of our Saviour to his disciples, Matt. xix. 28—Who intended in that promise; not Judas—The accomplishment of the promise—The testimony of Peter Martyr considered—The conclusion of the forementioned objection—The engagement of the faithfulness of God for the accomplishment of his promise, 1 Cor. i. 9; 1 Thess. v. 23, 24; 2 Thess. iii. 3—The nature of the faithfulness of God, expressed in the foregoing places, inquired into—Perverted by Mr G.—His notion of the faithfulness of God weighed and rejected—What intended in the Scripture by the faithfulness of God—The close of the confirmation of the proposition or the argument proposed from the promises of God—The assumption thereof vindicated—The sense put upon it by Mr G.—The question begged.

THE consideration of *the promises of God*, which are all branches of the forementioned root, all streaming from the fountain of the covenant of grace, is, according to the method proposed, in the next place incumbent on us. The argument for the truth under contest which from hence is afforded and used is by Mr Goodwin termed "The first-born of our strength," chap. xi. sect. 1, p. 225; and indeed we are content that it may be so accounted, desiring nothing more ancient, nothing more strong, effectual, and powerful, to stay our souls upon, than the promises of that God who cannot lie.[1] I shall, for the present, insist only on those which peculiarly assert, and in the name and authority of God confirm, that part of the truth we are peculiarly in demonstration of,—namely, the unchangeable stability of the love and favour of God to believers, in regard whereof he turneth not from them nor forsaketh them upon the account of any such interveniences whatever as he will suffer to be interposed in their communion with him; leaving those wherein he gives assurance upon assurance that he will give out unto them such continual supplies of his Spirit and grace that they shall never depart from him to their due and proper place.

I am not unacquainted with the usual exception that lieth against the demonstration of the truth in hand from the promises of God, to wit, *that they are conditional*, depending on some things in the persons themselves to whom they are made, upon whose change or alteration they also may be frustrated, and not receive their accomplishment. Whether this plea may be admitted against the particular promises that we shall insist upon will be put upon the trial, when we come to the particular handling of them. For the present, being resolved, by God's assistance, to pursue the demonstration proposed from them, it may not be amiss, yea, rather it may be very useful, to insist a little upon the promises themselves, their nature

[1] Heb. vi. 18; Tit. i. 2.

and excellency, that we may be the more stirred up to inquire after every truth and sweetness of the love, grace, and kindness (they being the peculiar way chosen of God for the manifestation of his good-will to sinners) that is in them; and I shall do it briefly, that I may proceed with the business of my present intendment.

Gospel promises, then, are,—1. The free and gracious dispensations, and, 2. discoveries of God's good-will and love, to, 3. sinners, 4. through Christ, 5. in a covenant of grace; 6. wherein, upon his truth and faithfulness, he engageth himself to be their God, to give his Son unto them and for them, and his Holy Spirit to abide with them, with all things that are either required in them or are necessary for them to make them accepted before him, and to bring them to an enjoyment of him.

I call them *gospel promises*, not as though they were only contained in the books of the New Testament, or given only by Christ after his coming in the flesh,—for they were given from the beginning of the world, or first entrance of sin,[1] and the Lord made plentiful provision of them and by them for his people under the old testament,—but only to distinguish them from the promises of the law, which hold out a word of truth and faithfulness, engaged for a reward of life to them that yield obedience thereunto (there being an indissolvable connection between entering into life and keeping the commandments), and so to manifest that they all belong to the gospel properly so called, or the tidings of that peace for sinners which was wrought out and manifested by Jesus Christ.[2]

Farther; I do not give this for the description of any one single individual promise as it lieth in any place of Scripture, as though it expressly contained all the things mentioned herein (though virtually it doth so), but rather to show what is the design, aim, and good-will of God in them all; which he discovers and manifests in them by several parcels, according as they may be suited to the advancement of his glory, in reference to the persons to whom they are made. Upon the matter, all the promises of the gospel are but one, and every one of them comprehends and tenders the same love, the same Christ, the same Spirit, which are in them all. None can have an interest in any one but he hath an interest in the good of them all, that being only represented variously for the advantage of them that believe. My design is to describe the general intention of God in all gospel promises, whereby they, being equally spirited, become as one.[3] And concerning these, I say,—

1. That they are *free* and *gracious* as to the rise and fountain of them. They are given unto us merely through the good-will and

[1] Gen. iii. 14, 15; Gal. iii. 17; Tit. i. 2.
[2] Gal. iii. 12; Luke ii. 10; Eph. ii. 15; Isa. lii. 7.
[3] Gal. iii. 16, 17; Eph. ii. 12; Heb. vi. 17, 18.

pleasure of God.[1] That which is of *promise* is everywhere opposed to that which is of *doubt*, or that which is any way *deserved* or procured by us: Gal. iii. 18, "If the inheritance be of the law" (which includes all that in us is desirable, acceptable, and deserving), "it is no more of promise,"—that is, free, and of mere grace. He that can find out any reason or cause without God himself why he should promise any good thing whatever to sinners (as all are, and are shut up under sin, till the promise come, Gal. iii. 22), may be allowed to glory in the invention which he hath found out, Matt. xx. 15. A well-conditioned nature, necessitating him to a velleity of doing good, and yielding relief to them that are in misery (though justly receiving the due reward of their deeds, which even among the sons of men is a virtue dwelling upon the confines of vice), for their recovery, is by some imposed on him. But that this is not the fountain and rise of his promises needs no other evidence but the light of this consideration: That which is natural is necessary and universal; promises are distinguishing as to them in misery, at least they are given to men, and not to fallen angels. But may not God do what he will with his own?

Farther; Jesus Christ is himself in the promise. He is the great original, matter, and subject of the promises, and the giving of him was doubtless of free grace and mercy: so John iii. 16, "God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son;" and Rom. v. 8, "God commendeth his love toward us, in that, whilst we were yet sinners, Christ died for us;" and in 1 John iv. 10, "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins." All is laid upon the account of love and free grace, Matt. xi. 26. I confess there are following promises given out for the orderly carrying on of the persons to whom the main, original, fundamental promises are made, unto the end designed for them, that seem to have qualifications and conditions in them; but yet even those are all to be resolved into the primitive grant of mercy. That which promiseth life upon believing,—being of use to stir men up unto and carry them on in faith and obedience,—must yet, as to the pure nature of the promise, be resolved into that which freely is promised, namely, Christ himself, and with him both faith and life, believing and salvation. As in your automata there is one original spring or wheel that giveth motion to sundry lesser and subordinate movers, that are carried on with great variety, sometimes with a seeming contrariety one to another, but all regularly answering and being subservient to the impression of the first mover; [so] the first great promise of Christ, and all good things in him, is that which spirits and principles all other promises whatsoever;[2] and

[1] Tit. i. 2; 2 Pet. i. 3, 4.

[2] Gen. iii. 15, xlix. 10; Isa. ix. 6; 2 Cor. i. 20.

howsoever they may seem to move upon conditional terms, yet they are all to be resolved into that absolute and free original spring. Hence that great grant of gospel mercy is called "The gift by him," Rom. v. 15–18; yea, all the promises of the law, as to their original emanation from God, and the constitution of the reward in them, engaged to be bestowed for the services required, are free and gracious; there is not any natural, indispensable connection between obedience and reward, as there is between sin and punishment, as I have elsewhere at large disputed and proved.[1]

2. I call them *discoveries and manifestations of God's good-will and love*, which is the prime and sole cause of all the good things which are wrapped up and contained in them. Of this good-will of God, the promises which he hath given are the sole discoveries. We do not in this discourse take "promises" merely for what God hath said he will do in terms expressly, but for every assertion of his good-will and kindness to us in Christ; all which was first held out under a word of promise, Gen. iii. 15. And this the apostle infers in Tit. i. 2, 3, "In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began, but hath in due times manifested his word through preaching," or discovered or made known that good-will of his by the promises in preaching of the gospel. And to this extent of significancy is that "promise" in the Scripture, both name and thing, in very many places stretched out. Every thing whatever that is manifestative of grace and good-will to sinners is of the promise, though it be not cast into a promissory form of expression. Yea, whereas, strictly, a promise respecteth that which is either only future, and not of present existence, or the continuance of that which is, yet even expressions of things formerly done and of a present performance (some individuals to the end of the world being to be made anew partakers of the grace, good-will, and mercy in them) do belong to the promise also, in that acceptation of it which the Holy Ghost in many places leads unto,[2] and which we now insist upon.

3. I say they are *made unto sinners*, and that *as sinners*, under no other qualification whatever, it being by the mercy of the promise alone that any men are relieved out of that condition of being sinners, and morally nothing else. Were not the promises *originally* made to sinners, there would never any one be found in any other state or condition.[3] I know there are promises made to believers, even such as are unchangeable, and shall bear them into the bosom of God; but I say these are all *consequential*, and upon supposition of the first and great promise, whereby Christ himself, and faith for his sake, are bestowed on them. This runs through them all,

[1] Diatr. de Just. Div. [2] Micah vii. 17–20.
[3] Eph. ii. 12; Rom. iii. 19; Gal. iii. 22.

as the very tenor of them and method of God in them do manifest,[1] as we shall see afterward. So the apostle, Gal. iii. 22, "The Scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe." All are shut up under sin until the promise of salvation by Jesus Christ and faith in him cometh in for their deliverance. The promise is given to them as shut up under sin, which they receive by mixing it with faith. And Rom. iii. 23, 24, "All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus." Their condition is a condition of sin and falling short of the glory of God, when the promise for justification is given unto them and finds them. Thence the Lord tells us, Isa. liv. 8, 9, that this promise of mercy is like that which he made about the waters of Noah, where is mentioned no condition at all of it, but only the sins of men.[2] And in that state unquestionably was Adam when the first promise was given unto him. To say, then, that gospel promises are made to men in such conditions, and are to be made good only upon the account of men's abiding in the condition wherein they are when the promise is made to them, is to say, that for men to leave the state of sin is the way to frustrate all the promises of God. All deliverance from a state of sin is by grace;[3] all grace is of promise. Under that condition, then, of sin doth the promise find men, and from thence relieve them.

4. I say, these *discoveries of God's good-will* are made *through Christ*, as the only *medium* of their accomplishment, and only *procuring cause* of the good things that, flowing from the good-will of God, are inwrapped and tendered in them, 2 Cor. i. 20. And they are said to be in Christ, as,—(1.) The great *messenger of the covenant*, as in him who comes from the Father, because God hath confirmed and ratified them all in him; not in themselves, but unto us. He hath in him and by him given faith and assurance of them all unto us, declaring and confirming his good-will and love to us by him. He reveals the Father (as a father) from his own bosom, John i. 18, declaring his name or grace unto his, chap. xvii. 3. "All the promises of God in him are yea, and in him amen, to the glory of God by us," 2 Cor. i. 20. In him, and by his mediation, they have all their confirmation, establishment, and unchangeableness unto us. (2.) Because he hath undertaken to be *surety* of that covenant whereof they are the promises: Heb. vii. 22, he is "the surety" of the covenant; that is, one who hath undertaken, both on the part of God and on ours, whatever is needful for confirmation thereof. And, (3.) Because that himself is the *great subject* of all these promises, and in him (it being of his own purchase and procuring, he "having obtained

[1] John iii. 16; Rom. viii. 32; 1 Cor. i. 30; Phil. i. 29; Eph. i. 3.
[2] Gen. viii. 21, 22. [3] Eph. ii. 4, 5, 8.

eternal redemption for us," Heb. ix. 12) there is treasured up all the fulness of those mercies which in them God hath graciously engaged himself to bestow, they being all annexed to him, as the portion he brings with him to the soul.[1] Then, I say,—

5. That *they are discoveries of God's good-will in a covenant of grace.* They are, indeed, the branches, streams, and manifesting conveyances, of the grace of that covenant, and of the good-will of God putting itself forth therein. Hence the apostle mentions the "covenants of promise," Eph. ii. 12, either for the promises of the covenant or its manifestation, as I said before. Indeed, as to the subject-matter and eminently, the promise is but one, as the covenant is no more; but both come under a plural expression, because they have been variously delivered and renewed upon several occasions. So the covenant of grace is said to be established upon these promises, Heb. viii. 6; that is, the grace and mercy of the covenant, and the usefulness of it to the ends of a covenant, to keep God and man together in peace and agreement, are laid upon these promises, to be by them confirmed and established unto us, God having by them revealed his good-will unto us, with an attendancy of stipulation of duty. Their use, for the begetting and continuing communion between God and us, with the concomitancy of precepts, places them in the capacity of a covenant. And then,—

6. I mentioned the *foundation* of the *certainty* and *unchangeableness* of these promises, with our assurance of their accomplishment. The engagements and undertakings of God, upon his truth and faithfulness, are the stock and unmovable foundation of this respect of them. Therefore, speaking of them, the Holy Ghost often backs them with that property of God, "He cannot lie:" so Heb. vi. 17, 18, "God, willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath; that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie," etc.; so Tit. i. 2, "God, which cannot lie, hath promised us eternal life." There is no one makes a solemn promise, but as it ought to proceed from him in sincerity and truth, so he engageth his truth and faithfulness, in all the credit of them, for the accomplishment thereof what lieth in him; and on this account doth David so often appeal unto and call upon the righteousness of God as to the fulfilling of his promises and the word which he caused him to put his trust in.[2] It is because of his engagement of his truth and faithfulness, whence it becometh a righteous thing with him to perform what he hath spoken. How far this respect of the promises extends, and wherein it is capable of a dispensation, is the sum of our present controversy. But of this afterward. Then,—

[1] John i. 16; Col. i. 18, 19, ii. 19, etc; Rom. viii. 32.
[2] Ps. xxxi. 1, 5, 14; Isa. xlv. 19; 2 Pet. i. 1.

7. A brief description of *the matter* of these promises, and what God freely engageth himself unto in them, was insisted on. Of this, of the promises in this regard, there is one main fountain or spring, whereof there are two everlasting streams, whence thousands of refreshing rivulets do flow. The original fountain and spring of all good unto us, both in respect of its being and manifestation, is that he will be our God: Gen. xvii. 1, 2, "I am the Almighty God; walk before me and be thou perfect: and I will make my covenant," etc. So everywhere, as the bottom of his dealing with us in covenant: Jer. xxxi. 33, "I will be their God, and they shall be my people;" Isa. liv. 5; Hos. ii. 23; and in very many other places. Now, that he may thus be our God, two things are required:—

(1.) That all *breaches* and differences between him and us be removed, perfect peace and agreement made, and we rendered acceptable and well-pleasing in his sight. These are the terms whereon they stand to whom he is a God in covenant. For the accomplishment of this is the first main stream that floweth from the former fountain,—namely, the great promise of giving Christ to us and for us, "who is our peace," Eph. ii. 14; and "who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption," 1 Cor. i. 30; "who loves us, and washeth us in his own blood, and makes us kings and priests to God and his Father," Rev. i. 5, 6; "giving himself for his church, that he might sanctify and cleanse it, with the washing of water by the word, that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish," Eph. v. 25–27;[1] doing and accomplishing all things that are required for the forementioned ends. And this is the first main stream that flows from that fountain. Christ as a redeemer, a saviour, a mighty one, a priest, a sacrifice, an oblation, our peace, righteousness, and the author of our salvation, is the subject-matter thereof.

(2.) That we may be kept and preserved meet for communion with him as *our God*, and for the enjoyment of him as our reward. For this end flows forth the other great stream from the former fountain, —namely, the promise of the Holy Spirit; which he gives us to "make us meet for the inheritance of the saints in light,"[2] to put forth and exercise towards us all the acts of his love which are needful for us, and to work in us the obedience which he requires and accepts of us in Jesus Christ, so preserving us for himself. This promise of the Spirit in the covenant, with his work and peculiar dispensations, is plentifully witnessed in very many places of the Old Testament and New,[3] some whereof must afterward be insisted on.

[1] Tit. ii. 14; Gen. iii. 15; Job xix. 25; Eph. ii. 13; Heb. ii. 17; Eph. v. 2; 1 Tim. ii. 6.
[2] Col. i. 12.
[3] Isa. lix. 21; Ezek. xi. 19, xxxvi. 26, 27; John xiv. 16, 17, etc.

Hence he is sometimes called the promise of the covenant: Acts ii. 39, "The promise is to you;" which promise is that which Christ receiveth from his Father, verse 33, even "the promise of the Holy Ghost." I shall only add, that though this be a great stream flowing from the first fountain, yet it comes not immediately thence, but issues out from the stream before mentioned, the promise of the Lord Jesus Christ; for he is given by him unto us, as procured for us, and given only unto his, John xiv. 16, 17, 26; Gal. iv. 6.

Now, from these two grand streams do a thousand rivulets flow forth for our refreshment. All the mercy that Christ hath purchased, all the graces that the Spirit doth bring forth (which in the former description I call all things that are either required in them or needful to them to make them accepted before God, and to bring them to an enjoyment of him), all promises of mercy and forgiveness, all promises of faith and holiness, of obedience and perseverance, of joy and consolation, of correction, affliction, and deliverance,—they all flow from these; that is, from the matter of those promises doth the matter of these arise. And hence are the ensuing corollaries:—

1. Whoever hath an interest in any one promise hath an interest in them all, and in the fountain-love from whence they flow. He to whom any drop of their sweetness floweth may follow it up unto the spring. Were we wise, each taste of mercy would lead us to the ocean of love. Have we any hold on a promise?—we may get upon it, and it will bring us to the main, Christ himself and the Spirit, and so into the bosom of the Father. It is our folly to abide upon a little, which is given us merely to make us press for more.

2. That the most conditional promises are to be resolved into absolute and unconditional love. God, who hath promised *life* upon *believing*, hath promised *believing* on no condition (on our parts) at all, because to sinners.

This in general being given in concerning the nature of the promises, I shall proceed to some such considerations as are of particular usefulness unto that improvement which, the Lord assisting, I intend to make of them, for the confirmation of the truth under debate. And they are these:—

1. All the promises of God are *true* and faithful, and shall most certainly all of them be accomplished. His nature, his veracity, his unchangeableness, his omniscience and omnipotency, do all contribute strength to this assertion. Neither can these properties possibly continue entire, and the honour of them be preserved unto the Lord, if the least failing in the accomplishment of his promises be ascribed unto him. Every such failing must of necessity relate to some such principle as stands in direct opposition to one or more of the perfections before mentioned. It must be a failing in the truth, unchangeableness, prescience, or power, that must frustrate

the promise of any one. We, indeed, often alter our resolutions, and the promise that is gone out of our mouths, and that perhaps righteously, upon some such change of things as we could not foresee, nor ought to have supposed, when we entered into our engagements. No such thing can be ascribed unto Him who knows all things, with their circumstances, that can possibly come to pass, and nath determined what shall so do, and therefore will not engage in any promise that he knows something which he foresaw would follow after would cause him to alter. It were a ludicrous thing in any son of man to make a solemn promise of any thing to another, if he particularly knew that in an hour some such thing would happen as should enforce him to change and alter that promise which he had so solemnly entered into. And shall we ascribe such an action to Him before whom all things are open and naked? Shall he be thought solemnly to engage himself to do or accomplish any thing which yet not only he will not do, but also at that instant hath those things in his eye and under his consideration for which he will not so do as he promiseth, and determined before that he would not so do? If this be not unworthy the infinite goodness, wisdom, and faithfulness of God, I know not what can or may be ascribed unto him that is. Yea, the truth and veracity of God in his promises cannot be denied him without denying him his deity, or asserted without the certain accomplishment of what he hath promised.

2. There are sundry things relating to the accomplishment of promises, as to *times, seasons, persons, ways*, etc., wherein we have been in the dark, and yet the promises concerning them be fully accomplished. The rejection of the Jews supplies us with an instance pregnant with this objection. The apostle tells us that with many this objection did arise on that account: "If the Jews be rejected, then the promises of God to them do fail," Rom. iii. 3. He lays down and answers this objection, discovering that fallacy therein by a distinction. "They are not," saith he, "all Israel which are of Israel," chap. ix. 6; as if he had said, "There is a twofold Israel, an Israel after the flesh only, and an Israel after the flesh and Spirit also." Unto these latter were the promises made; and therefore they who look on the former only think it faileth, whereas indeed it holdeth to its full accomplishment. So he disputes again, chap. xi. 7. I say, then, we may be in the dark as to many circumstances of the fulfilling of promises, when yet they have received a most exact accomplishment.

3. All the *conditional* promises of God are exactly true, and shall be most faithfully made good by accomplishment as to that wherein their being as promises doth consist, as far as they are declarative of God's purpose and intendment. This is that which, as I said before, some object, "Many of the promises of God are conditional, and

their truth must needs depend upon the accomplishment of the condition mentioned in them; if that be not fulfilled, then they also must fail, and be of none effect." I say, then, that even the conditional promises of God are absolutely made good. The truth of any promise consists in this, that that whereof it speaks answers the affirmation itself. For instance, "He that believeth shall be saved." This promise doth not primarily affirm that any one shall be saved, and notwithstanding it no one might so be; but only this it affirms, that there is an infallible connection between faith and salvation, and therein is the promise most true, whether any one believe or no. Briefly, conditional promises are either simply declarative of the *will* of God in fixing an exact correspondency between a condition mentioned and required in them and the thing promised by them, in which case they have an unchangeable and infallible verity in themselves, as there is in all the promises of the moral law to this day, for he that keeps the commandments shall live; or they are also the discoveries of the *good-will* of God, his intendments and purposes, that whereof they make mention being not the condition whereon his purposes are suspended, but the way and means whereby the thing promised is to be accomplished; and in the latter acceptation alone are they, in the business in hand, our concernment.

4. That the promises concerning perseverance (as hath been often intimated) are of two sorts;—the first, of the continuance of the favour of God to us, which respects our *justification;* the other, of the continuance of our obedience unto God, which respects our *sanctification.* Let us consider both of them, and begin with the latter:—

(1.) Of them I say, then, they are all *absolute,* not one of them conditional (so as to be suspended as to their accomplishment on any conditions), nor can be. The truth of God in them hath not its efficiency and accomplishment by establishing the relation that is between one thing and another, or the connection that is between duty and reward, as it is in conditional promises that are purely and merely so; but enforceth the exact fulfilling of the thing promised, and that with respect unto, and for the preservation of, the glory of that excellency of God, "He cannot lie." Let it be considered what that condition or those conditions be, or may be, on which promises of this nature should be suspended, and the truth of the former assertion will evidently appear. That God hath promised unto believers that they shall for ever abide with him in the obedience of the covenant unto the end shall afterward be proved by a cloud of witnesses. What, now, is the condition whereon this promise doth depend? "It is," says Mr Goodwin, "that they perform their duty, that they suffer not themselves to be seduced, nor willingly cast off the yoke of Christ." But what doth this amount unto? Is it not thus

much: If they abide with God (for if they perform their duty, and do not suffer themselves to be seduced, nor willingly depart from God, they abide with him), God hath promised that they shall abide with him,—upon condition they abide with him, he hath promised they shall? "Egregiam vero laudem!" Can any thing more ridiculous be invented? If men abide with God, what need they any promise that they shall so do? The whole virtue of the promise depends on that condition, and that condition containeth all that is promised. Neither is it possible that any thing can be invented to be supplied as the condition or conditions of these promises, but it will quickly appear, upon consideration, that however it may be differently phrased, yet indeed it is coincident with the matter of the promise itself. That condition or those conditions must consist in some act, acts, way, or course of acceptable obedience in them to whom the promises are made. This the nature of the thing itself requireth. Now, every such act, way, or course, is the matter of the promise, even universal obedience. Now, if one man should promise another that he should, at such a time and place, be supplied with a hundred pounds to pay his debts, on condition that he came and brought the money himself, ought he to be esteemed to have a mind to relieve the poor man, or to mock him? To affirm that when God promiseth to write his law in our hearts, to put his fear in our inward parts, to create in us a new heart, to circumcise our hearts that we may fear him always, to give us his Spirit to abide with us for ever, to preserve us by his power, so that we shall never leave him nor forsake him, shall live to him, and sin shall not have dominion over us, etc., he doth it upon condition that we write his law in our hearts, circumcise them, continue to fear him, abide with him, not forsake him, etc., is to make him to mock and deride at their misery whose relief he so seriously pretendeth. Whatever promises, then, of this kind (promises of working obedience in us, for our abiding with him) shall be produced, they will be found to be absolute and independent on any condition whatever, and their truth no ways to be maintained but in and by their accomplishment.

(2.) For those of the first sort, which I shall now handle, farther to clear the foundation of their ensuing application, I shall propose only some few things unto consideration; as,—

[1.] That they are not to be taken or looked upon, as to their use for argument in the present controversy, separated and divided from those other promises formerly insisted on, which assure believers that they shall always abide with God as to their obedience. All hope that any have to prevail against them is by dividing of them. It is a very vain supposal and foundation of sand which our adversaries build their inferences upon, which they make against the doctrine of the saints' perseverance,—namely, the impossibility that God

should continue his love and favour to them whilst they wallow in all manner of abominations and desperate rebellions against him; a hypothesis crudely imposed on our doctrine, and repeated over and over as a matter of the greatest detestation and abomination that can fall within the thoughts of men. And such supposals and conclusions are made thereupon as border, at least, upon the cursed coast of blasphemy. But *cui fini*, I pray, to what end, is all this noise? as though any had ever asserted that God promised to continue his love and gracious acceptation always to his saints, and yet took no care nor had promised that they should be continued saints, but would suffer them to turn very devils. It is as easy for men to confute hypotheses created in their own imaginations as to cast down men of straw of their own framing and setting up. We say, indeed, that God hath faithfully promised that he will never leave nor forsake believers; but withal that he hath no less faithfully engaged himself that they shall never wickedly depart from him, but that they shall continue saints and believers. Yea (if I may so say), promising always to accept them freely, it is incumbent on his holy Majesty, upon the account of his truth, faithfulness, and righteousness, to preserve them such as, without the least dishonour to his grace and holiness, yea, to the greatest advantage of his glory, he may always accept them, delight in them, and rejoice over them; and so he tells us he doth, Jer. xxxi. 3, "Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee." He draws us with kindness to follow him, obey him, live unto him, abide with him, because he loves us with an everlasting love.

[2.] That these promises of God do not properly, and as to their original rise, depend on any *conditions* in believers, or by them to be fulfilled, but are the fountains and springs of all conditions whatever that are required to be in them or expected from them, though the grace and obedience of believers are often mentioned in them as the means whereby they are carried on, according to the appointment of God, unto the enjoyment of what is promised or continued in it. This one consideration, that there is in very many of these promises an express *non obstante*, or a notwithstanding the want of any such condition as might seem to be at the bottom and to be the occasion of any such promise or engagement of the grace of God, is sufficient to give light and evidence to this assertion. If the Lord saith expressly that he will do so with men, though it be not so with them, his doing of that thing cannot depend on any such thing in them, as he saith notwithstanding the want of it he will do it. Take one instance: Isa. liv. 8–10, "In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment; but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the LORD thy Redeemer. For this is as the

waters of Noah unto me: for as I have sworn that the waters of Noah should no more go over the earth; so have I sworn that I would not be wroth with thee, nor rebuke thee. For the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed; but my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, saith the LORD that hath mercy on thee." He will have mercy on them with everlasting kindness, verse 8. "Yea, but how if they walk not worthy of it?" Why, yet this kindness shall not fail, saith the Lord; for it is "as the waters of Noah." God sweareth that "the waters of Noah shall no more cover the earth," and you see the stability of what he hath spoken; the world is now "reserved for fire," but drowned it shall be no more. "My kindness to thee," says God, "is such, it shall no more depart from thee than those waters shall return again upon the earth." Neither is this all wherein he compareth his kindness to the waters of Noah, but in this also, in that in the promise of drowning the world no more there was an express *non obstante* for the sins of men: Gen. viii. 21, "The LORD said in his heart, I will not again curse the ground any more for man's sake; for the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth." "Though men grow full of wickedness and violence, as before the flood they were, yet," saith the Lord, "the world shall be drowned no more." And in this doth the promise of kindness hold proportion with that of the waters of Noah. There is an express relief in it against the sins and failings of them to whom it is made,—namely, such as he will permit them to fall into, whilst he certainly preserves them from all such as are inconsistent with his love and favour, according to the tenor of the covenant of grace; and therefore it depends not on any thing in them, being made with a proviso for any such defect as in them may be imagined.

[3.] To affirm that these promises of God's abiding with us to the end do depend on any *condition* that may be uncertain in its event, by us to be fulfilled, as to their accomplishment, doth wholly enervate and make them void in respect to the main end for which they were given us of God. That one chief end of them is to give the saints consolation in every condition, in all the straits, trials, and temptations, which they are to undergo or may be called to, is evident. When Joshua was entering upon the great work of subduing the Canaanites, and setting the tabernacle and people of God in their appointed inheritance, wherein he was to pass through innumerable difficulties, trials, and pressures, God gives him that word of promise, "I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee," Josh. i. 5. So are many of them made to the saints in their weakness, darkness, and desertions, as will appear by the consideration of the particular instances following, Isa. iv. 3, 4. Now, what one drop of consolation can a poor, drooping, tempted soul, squeeze out of such promises as de-

pend wholly and solely upon any thing within themselves: "He will be with me and be my God, it is true; but always provided that I continue to be his. That also is a sweet and gracious promise; but that I shall do so he hath not promised. It seems I have a *cursed liberty* left me of departing wickedly from him; so that, upon the matter, notwithstanding these promises of his, I am left to myself. If I will abide with him, well and good, he will abide with me, and so it will be well with me;—that he should so abide with me as to cause me to abide with him, it seems there is no such thing. Soul, look to thyself; all thy hopes and help are in thyself. But, alas! for the present I have no sense of this love of God, and I know not that I have any true, real, unfeigned obedience to him. Corruption is strong, temptations are many; what shall I say? Shall I exercise faith on those promises of God wherein he hath said and given assurance that 'he will be a God to me for ever?' According as my thoughts are of my own abiding with him, so may I think of them, and no otherwise; so that I am again rolled upon mine own hands, and left to mine own endeavours to extricate myself from these sad entanglements." What now becomes of the consolation which in these promises is intended? Are they not, on this account, rather flints and pieces of iron than breasts of comfort and joy?

Lastly, If it be so as is supposed, it is evident that God makes no promises unto *persons*, but only unto *conditions* and *qualifications;* —that is, his promises are not engagements of his love and goodwill to believers, but discoveries of his approbation of believing. Suppose any promise of God to be our God, our all-sufficient God for ever, not eminently to include an engagement for the effectual exertion of the all-sufficiency to preserve and continue us in such a state and spiritual condition as wherein he may with the glory and honour of his grace, and will not fail to, abide and continue our God, and you cut all the nerves and sinews of it, as to the administration of any consolation unto them to whom it is given. The promises must be made good, that is certain; and if they are accomplished or not accomplished unto men merely upon the account of such and such qualifications in them,—which if they are found, then they shall be fulfilled, if not, then they are suspended,—they are made to the conditions, and not at all to the persons. And though some, perhaps, will easily grant this, yet upon this account it cannot be said that God ever made any one promise unto his church as consisting of such persons, namely, Abraham and his seed; which is directly contrary to that of the apostle, Rom. ix. 8, where he calleth the elect "The children of the promise," or those to whom the promises were made. It appears, then, that neither are these promises of God conditional. As they proceed from free grace, so there is no other account on which they are given out, continued, and accom-

plished, towards the children of God. Though the things of the promise are often placed in dependence one on another, as means and ends, yet the promises themselves are absolute.

These few things being premised, I shall now name and insist upon some *particular promises*, wherein the Lord hath graciously engaged himself that he will abide to be a God in covenant unto his people and their guide unto death; from which I shall labour to make good this argument for the perseverance of the saints:—

"That which that God, 'who cannot lie' nor 'deceive,' 'with whom there is no variableness, neither shadow of turning,'[1] who is 'faithful' in all his promises, and all whose words are 'faithfulness and truth,' hath solemnly promised and engaged himself unto, to this end, that they unto whom he so promiseth and engageth himself may from those promises receive 'strong consolation,'—*that* he will certainly perform and accomplish. That he will be a God and a guide unto death unto his saints, that he will never leave them nor forsake them, that he will never cast them off nor leave them out of his favour, but will preserve them such as is meet for his holy majesty to embrace, love, and delight in, and that with an express notwithstanding for every such thing as might seem to provoke him to forsake them, he hath promised, and for the end mentioned; therefore, [the promise] that he will so abide with them, that his love shall be continued to them to the end, that he will preserve them unto himself, etc., according to his truth and faithfulness, shall be accomplished and fulfilled." The inference hath its strength from the nature, truth, and faithfulness of God; and whilst they abide in any credit with the sons of men, it may seem strange that it should be denied or questioned. The major proposition of the forementioned argument is examined by Mr Goodwin, chap. xi. sect 1, p. 225. Saith he,—

1. "What God hath promised in his word is certain in such a sense and upon such terms as God would be understood in his promises; but what he promised in one sense is not certain of performance in the other."

Ans. Doubtless, God's meaning and intention in his promises is the rule of their accomplishment. This sometimes we may not be able to fathom, and thereupon be exposed to temptations not a few concerning their fulfilling; so was it with them with whom Paul had to do in reference to the promises made to the seed of Abraham. The question, then, is not whether that which is promised in *one* sense shall be performed in *another;* but whether God's promises have, and shall certainly have, all of them, according to his intendment, any performance at all. And the aim of Mr Goodwin, in the example that he afterward produceth, is not to manifest that that which God promiseth shall certainly be performed only in that sense

[1] Titus i. 2; Heb. vi. 18; James i. 17; 1 Cor. i. 9.

wherein he made his promise, but that they may be performed, or not performed at all. It is not in whose sense they shall have their performance, but whether they shall have any performance or no. If the thing promised be not accomplished, the promise is not at all in any sense performed, unless Mr Goodwin will distinguish, and say there are two ways of any thing's performance, one whereby it is performed, another whereby it is not. But he proceeds to manifest this assertion by an induction of instances.

2. "God," saith he, "promised to Paul the lives of them that were in the ship. His intent and meaning was, not that they should all be preserved against whatever they in the ship might do to hinder that promise, but with this proviso or condition, that they in the ship should hearken unto him and follow his advice; which is evident from these words of Paul, 'Except these abide in the ship, ye cannot be saved:' and had they gone away, God had not made any breach of promise though they had been all drowned, Acts xxvii."

Ans. First, when men seriously promise any thing, which is wholly and absolutely in their power to accomplish and bring about, causing thereby good men to rest upon their word, and to declare unto others their repose upon their honesty and worth, if they do not make good what they have spoken, we account them unworthy promise-breakers, and they do it at the peril of all the repute of honesty, honour, and faith, they have in the world. With God it seems it is otherwise. He makes a solemn, gracious promise to Paul that the lives of all them in the ship with him should be saved. Paul, on whom it was as much incumbent as on any man in the world not to engage the name of God (that God whom he worshipped and preached) in any thing whose truth might in the least be liable to exception, being in the way of declaring a new doctrine to the world, which would have been everlastingly prejudiced by any misprision of the faithfulness of that God in whose name and authority he preached it: the sum of that doctrine, also, being the exaltation of that God, in opposition to all the pretended deities of the world;[1]—he, I say, boasts himself upon the promise that he had received that there should be "no loss of any man's life among them," verses 22, 25. He gives the reason of his confident assertion when all hope was taken away: Verse 25, "I believe God," saith he, "that it shall be even as it was told me." His faith in God was in reference to the event, that it should come to pass as it was told him. Faith in God, divine faith, can have nothing for its object that may fail it. He doth not say that he believes that God will be faithful to his promise in general, but also tells them wherein his faithfulness doth consist, even in the performance and accomplishment of that which he had promised. This he informs the centurion and the rest in the ship with him; and

[1] Acts xiv. 15, xvii. 24; 1 Tim. iv. 10.

if in the issue it had otherwise fallen out, there had not been any colour of justifying the faith of that God he served, or his own truth in bearing witness to him. Had any perished, those that remained would have argued him of lying. "Yea, but saith he not himself, 'Except these abide in the ship, ye cannot be saved.'" He did so indeed, and thereby declared the necessity of using suitable means, when Providence affords them to us, for the accomplishment of appointed, determined ends. God, who promiseth any thing, and affordeth means for the attaining of it, will direct them to whom those promises are made to the use of those means; as he doth the centurion by Paul. It being incumbent in this case on his holy Majesty, upon the account of his engaged faithfulness, to save them, he will yet have them subservient to his promise in their endeavours for their own safety. Means may be assigned for an end as to their ordinary subserviency thereunto, without any suspending of the event on them, as a condition of an uncertain issue and accomplishment. And therefore that this solemn promise made unto Paul, whose event and accomplishment, upon the account of his believing God, he absolutely believed, and whose performance he foretold, without the least intimation of any condition whatever (only he bids them not throw away the means of their preservation), should depend as to its fulfilling on such a condition as, in respect of the event, might not have been (God who made the promise not making any infallible provision for the condition), and so have been actually frustrate, is an assertion not only not grounded on these words of Paul, setting out the suitable means of the providence of God for the accomplishment of an appointed end, but also derogatory in the highest to the glory of the truth and faithfulness of God himself. But,—

3. "That promise," saith he, "of our Saviour to his disciples, Matt. xix. 28, that they who followed him in the regeneration should sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel, Judas being yet one of them, was not fulfilled; and in case the rest had declined, they also with him might have come short of the promise made unto them."

Ans. Christ "knew what was in man," and had no need of any to tell him; he knew from the beginning who it was that should betray him, and plainly pronounced him to be a devil. He knew he was so, that he believed not; that he would continue so; that he would betray him; that his end would be desperate; he pronounced a curse upon him, as being cursed by David, Ps. cix., so many generations before his coming into the world:[1] and is it probable now that he promised this man a throne for his following him in the regeneration, which [it] is most certain (take it in what sense you will) he did never follow him in, but only as he gave him his bodily attendance

[1] John vi. 64, 70, 71.

in his going up and down? He was never admitted to be witness of his resurrection. The time being not yet come wherein a discovery was to be made of the hypocrisy of Judas, that he might have space to carry on the work which he had to do, and the number of those who in a peculiar manner were to bear witness to the completing of the whole work of regeneration in the resurrection of Christ being twelve, he who was afterward admitted into that number being one that now followed him, Acts i. 21, 22, our blessed Saviour telleth them indefinitely, to their consolation, what will be the glorious issue of their following him, and bearing witness to him in this work. That which is promissory in the words is made to them who forsook all and followed him in the work mentioned: which, assuredly, he who was always a thief, a devil, a covetous person, that followed not in the main of the work itself, was none of; that promise being afterward fulfilled to another then present with Christ. It is granted, if the rest of the twelve had fallen away, you may suppose of them what you please. That they might fall away is to beg that which you cannot prove, nor will ever be granted you, though you should resolve to starve yourself if you get it not. But this is,—

4. "Confirmed out of Peter Martyr, whose doctrine it is that the promises of God are wont to be made with a respect unto the present estate and condition of things with men;—that is, they shall be performed unto men abiding under the qualifications unto which they are made; as, for example, what promises soever God maketh to believers with respect had to their faith, or as they are believers, are not to be looked on as performable, or obliging the maker of them unto them, in case they shall relapse into their former unbelief."

Ans. It is too well known how and to what end our author cites Peter Martyr and men of the same judgment with him in this controversy, and to how little advantage to his cause with discerning men he hath done it. In the same place from whence these words are taken, the author distinguisheth of the promises of God, and telleth you that some of them are conditional, which are, saith he, of a *legal nature*, which only show the connection between the condition or qualification they require and the thing they promise thereunto; and such are those whereof he speaks: but others, he tells you, are *absolute* and *evangelical*, not depending on any condition in us at all. And so he tells us, out of Chrysostom, that this of our Saviour, Matt. xix. 28, is of the former sort; and the accomplishment of such like promises as these he informs us to consist not in the actual fulfilling of what is conditionally affirmed, but in the certain truth of the axiom wherein the condition and the event as such are knit together.

To the example urged, I shall only ask what Mr Goodwin's judgment is of the promises that God hath made to believers that they

shall never relapse into their former state of unbelief, and on what condition they are made? Whether his promise of his love unto and acceptance of believers, wherein he will abide for ever, do not infer their preservation in the condition wherein they are (that is, as believers), will in the next place fall under our consideration. Your conclusion is, in the sense explained you admit the proposition, "Whatsoever God promiseth is certain,"—that is, it shall certainly be fulfilled, or it shall not!

There is, moreover, no small contribution of strength, as to our establishment in the faith of it, given to our proposition by the signal engagement of the faithfulness of God for the accomplishment of the promises which he makes unto us, as it is manifested in these words of the apostle, 1 Cor. i. 9, "God is faithful, by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of his Son." In the foregoing verse, he telleth them that God will confirm them to the end, that they may be blameless in the day of the Lord Christ; of which confident assertion he gives them this account, "God is faithful," to make good his promises made unto them; he changeth not. When a promise is once passed, that which first presents itself to the consideration of them to whom it is made, and whose concernment it is that it be fulfilled, is the faithfulness of him that hath made the promise. This property of God's nature doth the apostle therefore mind the saints of, to lead them to a full assurance of their preservation. His promise being passed, fear not his faithfulness for its accomplishment. Might there in this case a supposal be allowed of any such interveniencies as might intercept them in the way of enjoying what God truly promised, and cause them to come short thereof, what assurance could arise to them from the consideration of the faithfulness of God, who made those promises unto them? The faithfulness of God, then, is engaged for the accomplishment of the thing promised, which also shall be done in case that fail not. So also 1 Thess. v. 23, 24, "The very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it." He assures them of their preservation in and unto the enjoyment of the things which he prayed for, and that upon the account of his faithfulness who had promised them. And saith he, "He will do it,"—namely, because he is faithful. Let the oppositions to it be never so many, the difficulties never so great, the interveniencies what they will, "he is faithful, and he will do it," as it is affirmed, 2 Thess. iii. 3, "But the Lord is faithful, who shall stablish you, and keep you from evil;" as also in 1 Cor. x. 13, "God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able, but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it." The same

faithfulness of God is held out as that upon the account whereof no temptation shall befall believers, so as to separate them from him. The promise here peculiarly confirmed by it and established on it is such as no condition can tolerably be fixed unto. "I will not suffer believers to be overcome with temptations, in case they be not overcome with temptations," is a promise not to be ascribed to the infinite wisdom of God, with which we have to do; and yet no other can with the least colour be proposed. All sin, all falling from God, is upon temptation. Though Satan and the world should have no hand in drawing men aside from God, yet what they do from their own lusts, they do from temptation, James i. 14, 15. If God in his faithfulness will not suffer any temptation to prevail against believers, unless they neglect their duty and fall from him,—and they can no otherwise neglect their duty nor depart from him but upon the prevalency of temptation,—their abiding with him, their final unconquerableness, hath a certainty answerable to the faithfulness of God.

This part of our strength Mr Goodwin attempts to deprive us of, chap. xi. sect. 18, p. 236, in these words: "Whereas the apostle mentioneth the 'faithfulness of God' as that divine principle in him, or attribute, out of which he is moved to establish and confirm believers unto the end, and so keep them from evil, by 'faithfulness' he doth not necessarily mean that property or attribute of his that renders him true and just, or constant in the performance of his promises; as if the apostle in these or any like places supposed such a promise, one or more, made by him, by which he stands obliged to establish and confirm his saints unto the end by a strong and irresistible hand."

Ans. 1. The sum of this answer is, that the apostle, by saying "God is faithful," doth not understand God's faithfulness. What other virtue is intended in God by his faithfulness but that whereby his truth and his constancy in words and promises is signified, I know not. Let the places from the beginning of the Scriptures to the end wherein there is mention made of the faith or faithfulness of God, of his being faithful, with the application thereof, the scope and intendment of the place, be perused, and see if they will give the least allowance to turn aside from eyeing the property and perfection of God before mentioned, as that which they peculiarly intend. Deut. vii. 9; Ps. xxxvi. 5, lxxxix. 1, 2, 5, cxliii. 1; Isa. xlix. 7; Hos. ii. 20; Rom. iii. 3; 2 Tim. ii. 13; Heb. x. 23; 1 John i. 9, are some of them. Why we should wring out another sense of the expression in this place, I know not.

2. The faithfulness of God is not mentioned as that "*divine principle* out of which he is moved to establish and confirm believers to the end," but only to confirm them in the faith of his unchangeableness and constancy in accomplishing the work of his free grace, which he had begun in them and promised to confirm to the end.

The work flows from the principle of his free grace in Jesus Christ, whence alone he gives them great, free, and precious promises. His stability and constancy in those promises, as to their performance, is intended by his faithfulness and truth in them. What are the promises of God *improperly so called*, and *not exhibited in words*, which you intimate, I know not.

3. The apostle doth not only "suppose," but in the name and authority of God actually gives, in the places under consideration, promises of the certain and infallible preservation of believers to the end, asserting the immutability of God's engagement in them from his faithfulness. In brief, not to darken counsel and understanding with a multitude of words, by the *promises* of God we intend in a peculiar manner those expressed in the texts under consideration,—namely, that God will establish believers to the end, keep them from evil and all temptations that would overthrow them; and by the *faithfulness* of God, from whence believers have their assurance of the accomplishment of these promises, [we intend] that which the Scripture holds out, and all the world of believers have hitherto taken, to be the faithfulness of God, as was before described. But it seems the word is here used otherwise; for, saith he,—

"It is such a kind of faithfulness or disposition in him as that meant by Peter when he styleth him a 'faithful Creator.' Now, God is, and may properly be termed, a faithful Creator, because he constantly performs unto his creature whatsoever the relation of a Creator promiseth in an equitable and rational way unto it; which is, a great care and tenderness for the preservation and well-being of it. In like manner, he may, yea it is most likely that he is, called 'faithful' in his calling of men, as he is a spiritual Father or Creator, a giver of a new being unto men, because he never faileth to perform unto those new creatures of his whatsoever such a being as this, regularly interpreted, promiseth unto him who receiveth it from him who is the donor of it; that is, convenient and sufficient means for the preservation and well-being of it. So that the 'faithfulness of God' in the scripture in hand supposes no such promise made by God as our opposers imagine,—namely, whereby he should in terms or words stand engaged to establish, confirm, or keep believers from evil, his new creatures, his regenerated ones, after any such a manner but that they, if they be careless or negligent for themselves, may be shaken and decline, and commit evil notwithstanding."

Ans. 1. That by God's faithfulness, mentioned in that place of Peter, such a disposition as you afterward describe is intended, you had better say than undertake to prove. It is evident the scope of the apostle is, to exhort the saints of God in all their trials and afflictions to commit themselves and their ways with patience and quietness unto God, upon the account of his power to preserve them as he is

the Creator of all, and his constancy in receiving of them, being present with them, abiding with them, as he is faithful in his word and promises. Yea, and the interpretation our author would have fixed on the expression here used is not only remote from the intendment of the place, turning that into a general good disposition towards all his creatures which is intimated for the peculiar support of believers, and that in their distress, but also is in itself a false, fond, and loose assertion. There is no law nor relation of creation that lays hold on God so far as to oblige him to the communication of one drop of his goodness to any of the creatures beyond what is given them by their creation, or to continue that unto them for one moment, all the dispensation of himself unto his creatures flowing from his sovereign good pleasure, doing what he will with his own.

2. He doth very faintly, when he hath made the farthest step in confident asserting that he dares venture upon (it may be, and it is most likely), suppose that the faithfulness of God in these places under consideration may be taken in such a sense as that before described. But,—

(1.) This is no sense at all of the faithfulness of God, neither is the word ever used in Scripture to signify any such thing in God or man, nor can it with any tolerable sense be applied to any such thing; neither would there be any analogy between that which in God we call faithfulness and that virtue in man which is so termed. Nor is the faithfulness of God here mentioned upon any such account as will endure this description, being insisted on only to assure the saints of the steadfastness and unalterableness of God in the performance of his promises made to them; neither is the obligation of God to continue his love and favour, with grace and means of it, to believers, founded upon such a disposition as is imagined, but in the free purpose of his will, which he purposed in Jesus Christ before the world was. So that there is not the least appearance of truth or soundness of reasoning, or any thing that is desirable, in this attempt to corrupt the word of God.

(2.) Then the faithfulness of God in the scriptures in hand bespeaks his truth and stability in the performance of his promises made of establishing believers to the end, keeping them from evil, not suffering any temptation to befall them, but making withal a way to escape. In all which God assures them he will prevent all such carelessness and negligence in them as is inconsistent with their establishment; which he will certainly accomplish.

And this is our major proposition, with its supplies of light and strength, freed from such exceptions as Mr G. supposes it liable unto.

For the assumption, I shall not much trouble myself with that ridiculous sense (called "a sober and orthodox explication") which Mr Goodwin is pleased to put upon it to allow it to pass current. "In this

sense," saith he, "it is most true that God hath promised that all believers shall persevere; that is, that all true believers formally considered, that is, as such and abiding such, shall persevere, namely, in his grace and favour:" but this he presumes is not our sense, chap. xi. sect. 2, p. 226. And well he may presume it; for, whatever his greatest skill may enable him unto, we can make no sense of it but this, "God hath promised believers shall persevere in case they persevere;" which is to us upon the matter no sense at all. To persevere in God's grace and favour is to continue in faith and obedience; which if men do, God hath solemnly promised and sworn that they shall so do! Certainly there is an orthodox sense in God's promises that is not nonsense. Be it granted, then, that this is not our sense, not so much because not ours as because not sense, what is our meaning in this proposition? "It is," saith Mr Goodwin, "that God will so preserve believers that none of them shall make shipwreck of their faith, upon what quicksands of lust and sensuality soever they shall strike, against what rock of obduration and impenitency soever they dash." But I beseech you, who told you that this was our sense of this proposition? being, indeed, no more sense than that which you give in for your own. By "striking on the quicksands of lust, and dashing upon rocks of sensuality, impenitency, and obduration," you have in other places sufficiently explained yourself to intend their falling under the power of sin. And is this asserted by us to be the tenor of God's promises to believers, or is it not? or do you not know that it is not so? Did ever any say that God preserveth men in believing under obduration and impenitency?—that is, under unbelief; for no men can be obdurately impenitent but unbelievers. Do not you know that we maintain that the grace faithfully engaged to be bestowed on them is given them to this end, to preserve them from the power of sin, from obduration and impenitency, and shall certainly be effectual for that purpose?

"Prima est hæc ultio, quod se
Judice, nemo nocens absolvitur."

CHAPTER VI.

PARTICULAR PROMISES ILLUSTRATED.

The former argument confirmed by an induction of particular instances—Joshua i. 5 opened—The concernment of all believers in that promise proved by the apostle, Heb. xiii. 5.—The general interest of all believers in all the promises of God cleared—Objections answered—How Old Testament promises may be improved—The promise insisted on relates principally to spirituals—The strength of it to the end intended—1 Sam. xii. 22, to whom the promise there is given—The twofold use of this promise: threats to wicked men of use to the saints; promises to the saints of use to wicked men—Isa. iv. 2–4,

Ps. lxxxix. 30–37, opened—A condition of backsliding supposed in believers, yet they not rejected—God's abiding with his saints upon the account of his, 1. Faithfulness; 2. Loving-kindness; 3. Covenant; 4. Promise; 5. Oath—The intendment of the words insisted on from 1 Sam. xii. 22—Isa. xxvii. 2, 3, Zeph. iii. 17, illustrated—The intendment of these words, "I will not forsake thee"—The reason of the promise, and means promised therein—No cause in them to whom the promise is made—Ezek. xxxvi. 32, Isa. xliii. 22–25, opened; also Isa. lvii. 17—The cause in God himself only—The "name" of God, what it imports; his all-sufficiency engaged therein, and his goodness—The rise and fountain of all God's goodness to his people in his own good pleasure—The sum of our argument from this place of Scripture—Ps. xxiii. 4, 6, opened; the psalmist's use of assurance of perseverance—Inferences from the last use—2 Tim. iv. 18 opened—All believers in the same condition as to perseverance with David and Paul—The second inference from the place insisted on—Assurance a motive to obedience, and is the end that God intends to promote thereby—Ps. cxxv. 1, 2 explained; Ps. xxxvii. 28; Deut. xxxiii. 3—Inferences from that place of the psalmist—Perpetual preservation in the condition of saints promised to believers—Mr G.'s objections and exceptions to our exposition and argument from this place removed—Promises made originally to persons, not qualifications—Not the same reason of promises to the church and of threatenings to sinners—Other objections removed—Isa. liv. 7–10, the mind of the Lord in the promise mentioned in that place opened—The exposition given on that place and arguments from thence vindicated—Direction for the right improvement of promises—Hos. ii. 19, 20, opened—Of the general design of that chapter—The first part, of the total rejection of the church and political state of the Jews—The second, of promises to the remnant according to the election of grace—Of this four particulars: 1. Of conversion, verses 14, 15; 2. Of obedience and forsaking all false worship, verses 16, 17; 3. Of peace and quietness, verse 18; 4. Discovering the fountain of all the mercies, verses 19, 20—Some objections removed—To whom this promise is made—The promise farther opened; the persons to whom it is made—Verse 14 of that chapter opened—The wilderness condition whereunto men are allured by the gospel, what it imports: 1. Separation; 2. Entanglement—God's dealing with a soul in its wilderness condition—Promises given to persons in that condition—The sum of the foregoing promises—The persons to whom they are made farther described—The nature of the main promise itself considered—Of the main covenant between God and his saints—The properties of God engaged for the accomplishment of this promise—Mr G.'s exposition of this place considered and confuted—John x. 27–29 opened, vindicated.

Having cleared the truth of the one and meaning of the other proposition mentioned in the argument last proposed, I proceed to confirm the latter by an induction of particular promises. The first that I shall fix upon is that of Joshua i. 5, "I will be with thee: I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee." This promise, it is true, in this original copy of it, is a grant to one single person entering upon a peculiar employment; but the Holy Ghost hath eminently taught the saints of God to plead and improve it in all generations for their own advantage, and that not only upon the account of the general rule of the establishment of all promises in Jesus Christ to the glory of God by us,[1] but also by the application which himself makes of

[1] 2 Cor. i. 20.

it unto them, and all their occasions wherein they stand in need of the faithfulness of God therein: Heb. xiii. 5, "Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." The apostle layeth down an exhortation in the beginning of the verse against the inordinate desire of the things of the world, that are laboured after upon the account of this present life. To give power and efficacy to his exhortation, he manifesteth all such desires to be altogether needless, upon consideration of His all-sufficiency who hath promised never to forsake them; which he manifests by an instance in this promise given to Joshua, giving us withal a rule for the application of all the promises of the Old Testament which were made to the church and people of God. Some labour much to rob believers of the consolation intended for them in the evangelical promises of the Old Testament, though made in general to the church, upon this account, that they were made to the Jews, and being to them peculiar, their concernment now lieth not in them. If this plea might be admitted, I know not any one promise that would more evidently fall under the power of it than this we have now in consideration. It was made to a *peculiar person*, and that upon a peculiar occasion,—made to a general or captain of armies, with respect to the great wars he had to undertake upon the special command of God. May not a poor, hungry believer say, "What is this to me? I am not a general of an army, have no wars to make upon God's command. The virtue, doubtless, of this promise expired with the conquest of Canaan, and died with him to whom it was made." To manifest the sameness of love that is in all the promises, with their establishment in one Mediator, and the general concernment of believers in every one of them, however and on what occasion soever given to any, this promise to Joshua is here applied to the condition of the weakest, meanest, and poorest of the saints of God, to all and every one of them, be their state and condition what it will. And, doubtless, believers are not a little wanting to themselves and their own consolation that they do not more particularly close with those words of truth, grace, and faithfulness, which, upon sundry occasions and at divers times, have been given out unto the saints of old, even Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, David, and the residue of them who walked with God in their generations. These things in an especial manner are recorded for our consolation, "that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope," Rom. xv. 4. Now, the Holy Ghost, knowing the weakness of our faith, and how apt we are to be beaten from closing with the promises, and from mixing them with faith, upon the least discouragement that may arise (as, indeed, this is none of the least, "That the promise is not made to us, it was made to others, and they may reap the sweetness of it; God may be

faithful in it though we never enjoy the mercy intended by it;" I say), in the next words he leads believers by the hand to make the same conclusion with boldness and confidence, from this and the like promises, as David did of old, upon the many gracious assurances that he had received of the presence of God with him: Heb. xiii. 6, "So that," saith he (upon the account of that promise), "we may say boldly" (without staggering at it by unbelief), "The Lord is my helper." This is a conclusion of faith: "Because God said to Joshua, a believer, 'I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee' (though upon a particular occasion, and in reference to a particular employment), every believer may say with boldness, 'He is my helper.'"

It is true, the application of the promises here looks immediately unto temporals, but yet, being drawn out from the testimony of the continuance of the presence of God with his saints, doth much more powerfully conclude to spirituals; yea, the promise itself is of *spiritual* favour, and what concerns temporals is only from thence extracted. Let us, then, weigh a little the importance of this promise, which the apostle hath rescued from suffering under any private interpretation, and set at liberty to the use of all believers. To every one of them, then, God saith, directly and plainly, that he will "never leave them nor forsake them." If there should any question arise whether he should be taken at his word or no, it must be the devil that must be entertained as an advocate against him.[1] Unbelief, indeed, hath many pleas, and will have, in the breasts of saints, against closing with the faithfulness of God in this promise, and the issue of confidence in him which from a due closing with it would certainly flow. But shall our unbelief make the truth of God of none effect? He hath told us that "he will never leave us, nor forsake us." The old serpent, and some arguing from him herein, are ready to say, "Yea, 'hath God indeed said so?' The truth of it shall not indeed be surely so. It may be otherwise; for God doth know that many cases may fall out, that you may be utterly rejected by him, and cast out of his presence. You may have such oppositions rise against you in your walking with him as shall certainly overcome you and set you at enmity with him, or you may fully depart from him." And many such like pleadings will Satan furnish *the unbelief of believers* withal. If they are not sufficiently taught by experience what it is to give credit to Satan endeavouring to impair and call in question, upon any pretence whatever, the faithfulness of God and his truth, when will they learn it? Surely they have little need to join with their adversaries for the weakening of their supportments or the impairing of their consolations. Whereas there is an endeavour to make men believe that the denying any absolutely unchangeable promise of God unto believers makes much

[1] Gen. iii. 1.

for their comfort and refreshment, it shall afterward be considered in common, in reference also to those other demonstrations of the saints' perseverance that shall, God willing, be produced.

It will be excepted, that "God will not forsake them whilst they are believers; but if they forsake him and fall from him, he is at liberty to renounce them also." But that God's not-forsaking of any is no more but a mere non-rejection of them shall afterward be disproved. Whom he doth not forsake as a God in covenant, to them doth he continue his presence, and towards them he exerciseth his power and all-sufficiency for their good. And if he can[not] by his Spirit and the power of his grace keep them whom he doth not forsake in a state and condition of *not-forsaking* him, he doth forsake them before they forsake him, yea, before he is said to forsake them. God's not-forsaking believers is effectually preventive of that state and condition in them on the account whereof it is asserted that he may forsake them.

1 Sam. xii. 22, the truth we have under consideration is confirmed by the prophet in the name and authority of God himself; and the words wherein it is done have the force of a promise, being declarative of the good-will of God unto his people in Christ: "For the LORD will not forsake his people for his great name's sake; because it hath pleased the LORD to make you his people."

The expression is the same with that which the Lord gives his people of his good-will in the covenant of grace; of which I have spoken before.[1] Many may be their calamities and afflictions, many their trials and temptations, many their desertions and darknesses, but God will not forsake them; he will not utterly cast them off for ever. That his people are his people in covenant, his secret ones, his spiritual church, the "remnant according to the election of grace," hath been before declared, in the handling of like places of Scripture. It is to vindicate this and the like promises from all surmises of failing and coming short of accomplishment that the apostle saith, "God hath not cast away his people which he foreknew," Rom. xi. 2; that is, he hath made good his promise to them, even to them among the Jews whom he did so foreknow as also to "predestinate them to be conformed to the image of his Son," chap. viii. 29: so out of all Israel saving "all Israel," even the whole Israel of God. That a discriminating purpose of God is intended in that expression hath been already declared, and shall, the Lord assisting, be farther manifested.

The promise as here mentioned hath a double use:—

1. It is held out as an *inducement* to obedience to that whole people; in reference whereunto he telleth them that "if they did wickedly, they should be destroyed, both they and their king," 1 Sam. xii. 25. In the dreadful threatenings that God denounceth against

[1] Gen. xvii. 1; Jer. xxxii. 38, 39.

wicked and impenitent ones, he hath an end to accomplish in reference to his saints, unto his own, even to make them know his terror, and to be acquainted with the abomination of sin. And in his promises, intended directly to them, he hath designs to accomplish upon the most wicked and ungodly, even to discover his approbation of that which is good, that they may be left inexcusable.

2. It was a *testimony* of his good-will unto his secret ones, his remnant, his residue, his brand out of the fire, unto his people called according to his eternal purpose, in the midst of his people by external profession, and of his presence with them, under the accomplishment of the threatening mentioned upon the generality of that nation. He did not forsake *them* when the people in general and their king were destroyed. Whatever outward dispensation he bringeth upon the whole, the love and grace of the promise shall certainly be reserved for them; as, Isa. iv. 2–4, the "remnant," the "escaping of Israel," those that were "written unto life," shall obtain, when the rest are destroyed or hardened.

So Ps. lxxxix. 30–37, "If his children forsake my law, and walk not in my judgments; if they break my statutes, and keep not my commandments; then will I visit their transgression with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes. Nevertheless my loving-kindness will I not utterly take from him, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail. My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips. Once have I sworn by my holiness that I will not lie unto David. His seed shall endure for ever, and his throne as the sun before me. It shall be established for ever as the moon, and as a faithful witness in heaven. Selah."

A supposal is made of such ways and walkings in the spiritual seed and offspring of the Lord Christ (which in the psalm is typed out by David), that the Lord will be as it were compelled to deal sharply with them for their iniquities and transgressions: yet his "loving-kindness," that shall abide with Christ in reference to the preservation of his seed; his "faithfulness," that shall not fail; his covenant and his oath shall be made good to the uttermost.

It is supposed (which is the worst that can be supposed) that in some degree, at least for some season, they may forsake the law, not keep the commandments, and profane the statutes of God (which continues the burden of poor believers to this day); yet the worst that the Lord threatens them with on this account, when they might have expected that he would have utterly cast off such unthankful, unfruitful backsliders, poor creatures, is but this, "I will visit them with a rod, and with stripes." They shall have whatever comes within the compass of correction or affliction; rod and stripes shall be on them, and that whether outward correction or inward desertion. But will the Lord proceed no farther? will he not for ever cast them

off, and ease himself of such a provoking generation? "No," saith the Lord; "there lie five things in the way, upon whose account I cannot so deal with them." All regard the same persons, as is evident from the antithesis that is in the discourse.

1. There is my *loving-kindness*, saith God, which is eternal and unchangeable; for "I love them with an everlasting love," Jer. xxxi. 3. This I cannot utterly take away. Though it may be hid and eclipsed as to the appearance and influences of it, yet utterly it shall not be taken away as to the reality of it. Though I chasten and correct them, yet my loving-kindness shall be continued to them. And then, saith he,—

2. There is my *faithfulness*, which I have engaged to them; which, whatever they do (that is, that I will suffer them to do, or that they may do upon supposition of the grace of the covenant,[1] wherewith they are supplied), though they behave themselves very foolishly and frowardly, yet that I must take care of,—that must not fail. 2 Tim. ii. 13, "He abideth faithful; he cannot deny himself." And this faithfulness, saith God, I have engaged in three things:—

(1.) In my *covenant* that I have made with them to be their God, and wherein I have promised that they shall be my people; wherein also I have made plentiful provision of mercy and grace for all their failings. And this must not be broken; my faithfulness is in it, and it must abide. My covenant of peace that I make with them is an everlasting covenant; it is "an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure," 2 Sam. xxiii. 5; Ezek. xxxvii. 26; it is a covenant of peace, an everlasting covenant.

(2.) "In the thing that is gone out of my lips," or the grace and love I have spoken of in the *promise*. Herein also will I be faithful, and that shall not be altered. All my promises are yea and amen in Christ Jesus, 2 Cor. i. 20. And,—

(3.) Lastly, All this I have confirmed by an *oath*, "I have sworn by my holiness," and "I will not lie."

So that in all these immutable things, wherein it is "impossible for God to lie," he hath treasured up strong consolation for them that do believe.[2] Though, then, the seed of Christ, which he is to see upon the account of his suffering for them (Isa. liii. 10), do sin and transgress, yet God hath put all these gracious obligations upon himself to reduce them by correction and affliction, but never to proceed to final sentence of utter rejection.

To this purpose, I say, are the words in the place of Samuel now mentioned:—

1. The *matter* of the promise, or what he promiseth the people, is, "he will not forsake them." God's not-forsaking them is not a bare not casting them off, but an active continuance with them in

[1] Isa. xliii. 22–26. [2] Heb. vi. 18.

love and mercy. He exercises not a pure negative act of his will towards any thing or person. Whom he hates not, he loves. So Heb. xiii. 5, these words, "I will not forsake thee," hold out a continual supply of all those wants whereunto in ourselves we are exposed, and what from his presence we do receive. "I will not forsake them" is, "I will continue my presence with them, a God in covenant." So he expresseth his presence with them, Isa. xxvii. 3, "I the LORD do keep it; I will water it every moment: lest any hurt it, I will keep it night and day." He abideth with his vineyard, so as to keep it and to preserve it from being destroyed. But may it not at one time or other be surprised into desolation? No; saith he, "I will keep it night and day." But what if this vineyard prove barren? what will he then do? Nay, but he will so deal with it that it shall never be so barren as to cause him to cast it up. He is not with it for nought; his presence is attended with grace and kindness. "I will water it," saith he; and that not now and then, but "every moment." He pours out fresh supplies of his Spirit upon it to make it fruitful. Thence it becomes "a vineyard of red wine," verse 2; the best wine, the most delicious, the most precious, to cheer the heart of God himself, as Zeph. iii. 17, "The LORD thy God in the midst of thee is mighty; he will save, he will rejoice over thee with joy; he will rest in his love, he will joy over thee with singing." He causes them thereby that come out of Jacob to take root; he makes Israel blossom and bud, and fill the face of the world with fruit. This is that which God promiseth his people: He will not forsake them, he will always give them his presence, in the kindness and supplies of a God in covenant, to protect them from others, to make them fruitful to himself. This is his not-forsaking them. He will preserve them from others; who shall take them out of his hand? He will make them fruitful to himself; "he will work, and who shall let him?"

2. The *reason* why the Lord will not forsake his people, why he will continue doing them good, is expressed in these words, "For his great name's sake." And in this assertion two things are considerable:—

(1.) A tacit exclusion of *any thing* in themselves for which, or upon consideration whereof, God will constantly abide with them. It is not for their sakes, for any thing in them, or for what they have done, may, or can do,—it is not upon the account of any condition or qualification whatever that may or may not be found in them,—but merely for his name's sake; which in the like case he expresseth fully, Ezek. xxxvi. 32, "Not for your sakes do I this, saith the Lord GOD, be it known unto you: be ashamed and confounded for your own ways, O house of Israel." The truth is, they may prove such as, on all accounts whatever, shall deserve to be rejected,—that nothing in appearance, or in their own sense, as well as others', though the root of the

matter be in them, may be found upon them,—when God takes delight in them; like those you have described at large, Isa. xliii. 22–25, "But thou hast not called upon me, O Jacob; but thou hast been weary of me, O Israel. Thou hast not brought me the small cattle of thy burnt-offerings; neither hast thou honoured me with thy sacrifices. I have not caused thee to serve with an offering, nor wearied thee with incense. Thou hast bought me no sweet cane with money, neither hast thou filled me with the fat of thy sacrifices: but thou hast made me to serve with thy sins, thou hast wearied me with thine iniquities. I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins." Weary of God they are, neglecting his worship, making his patience and forbearance to serve with their iniquities. It seems to be impossible almost for any creature to apprehend that God will not give them up to everlasting confusion. Yea, perhaps they may be froward in their follies, and contend with God when he goes to heal them: Isa. lvii. 17, "For the iniquity of his covetousness was I wroth, and smote him: I hid me, and was wroth, and he went on frowardly in the way of his heart." Iniquity is upon them, a vile iniquity, "the iniquity of covetousness." God is wroth with them, and smites, and hides him, and they go on frowardly. And yet for all this he "forsaketh not for ever," he abides to be their God; and that because his so doing is not bottomed on any consideration of what they are, have been, or will be, but he doth it for his name's sake, and with regard unto that which thereupon he will do for them. And upon this account this promise of God's abiding and continuing with his, let grace be never so weak, corruption never so strong, temptations never so violent, may be pleaded; and the Lord rejoices to be put in remembrance of it by the weakest, frailest, sinfulest saint or believer in the world.

(2.) The cause or reason is *positively* expressed why God will not forsake them: it is "for his great name's sake." His great name is all that he consults withal about his continuance with his people. This he calls himself, Isa. xliii. 25, "I am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake;" that is, "For no other cause in the world that may be found in thee or upon thee." The "name" of God is all that whereby to us he is known; all his attributes, his whole will,—all his glory. When God is said to do any thing for his name, it is either the cause and end of what he doth, or the principle from whence with the motive wherefore he doth it, that is by him intended. In the first sense, to do a thing for his name's sake is to do it for the manifestation of his glory, that he may be known to be God in the excellency of those perfections whereby he reveals himself to his, with most frequently a special regard to his faithfulness and grace. It is in these properties to make himself known, and to be exalted in the hearts of his. So all his dispensations in Jesus Christ are for "the praise of the

glory of his grace," Eph. i. 6,—that he may be exalted, lifted up, made known, believed, and received as a God pardoning iniquity in the Son of his love. And in this sense may the Lord be said to abide with his people "for his name's sake," for the exalting of his glory, that he may be known to be a God faithful in covenant and unchangeable in his love, who will not "cast off for ever" those whom he hath once received into favour. It will not enter into the hearts of believers sometimes why the Lord should so deal with them as he doth, and not cast them off. Their souls may go to rest as to this thing. He himself is glorious herein; he is exalted, and doth it on that account. If by his "name" you understand the principle from whence he worketh, and his motive thereunto, as it comprehends the whole long-suffering, gracious, tender, unchangeable nature of God, according as he hath revealed himself in Jesus Christ, in whom his name is, Exod. xxiii. 21, and which he hath committed to him to be manifested, John xvii. 6; so evidently two things in God are engaged, when he promiseth to work for his name's sake, or according to his great name:—

[1.] His *power* or *sufficiency*. Upon the engagement of the name of God on his people's behalf, Moses carefully pleads this latter or part thereof, Num. xiv. 17–19. God hath given his name unto his people; and this is wrapped up in that mercy, that he will lay out his power to pardon, heal, and do them good, in his preserving of them and abiding with them: "Let the power of my Lord be great, according as thou hast spoken, saying, The LORD is long-suffering," etc. And as, when he works for his name, the way whereby he will do it is according to the greatness of his power, so the fountain and rise from whence he will do it is,—

[2.] His *goodness, kindness, love, patience, mercy, grace, faithfulness, in Jesus Christ*. And thus, under the title of his "name," doth he call poor, afflicted, dark, hopeless, helpless creatures (upon any other account in the world), persons ready to be swallowed up in disconsolation and sorrow, to rest upon him: Isa. l. 10, "Who is among you that feareth the LORD, that obeyeth the voice of his servant, that walketh in darkness, and hath no light? let him trust in the name of the LORD, and stay upon his God."[1] When all other holds are gone, when flesh fails and heart fails, then doth God call poor souls to rest upon this name of his. So the psalmist, Ps. lxxiii. 26, "My flesh and my heart faileth," all strength, natural and spiritual, faileth and is gone: "but God is the strength of my heart," saith he, "and my portion for ever." Now, this is the sole motive also of God's continuance with his: he will do it because he himself is good, gracious, merciful, loving, tender; and he will lay out these properties to the utmost in their behalf, that it may be well with

[1] John xvii. 6, 26; Ps. xxii. 22, lxiii. 4, lxix. 30.

them, lifting up, exalting, and making himself gracious in so doing. This the Lord emphatically expresseth five times in one verse: Isa. xlvi. 4, "Even to your old age I am he; and even to hoar hairs will I carry you: I have made, and I will bear; even I will carry, and will deliver you."

This, then, I say, is the reason and only ground, this the principal aim and end, upon the account whereof the Lord will "not forsake his people."

3. The *rise* of all this goodness, kindness, faithfulness of God to his people, as to the exercise of it, is also expressed, and that is his own good pleasure: "Because it hath pleased the LORD to make you his people." This is the spring and fountain of all the goodness mentioned. God is essentially in himself of a good, gracious, and loving nature; but he acts all these properties, as to the works that outwardly are of him, "after the counsel of his own will," Eph. i. 11, according to the purpose which he purposeth in himself, and his purposes, all of them, have no other rise or cause but his own good pleasure. Why did the Lord make us his people, towards whom he might act according to the gracious properties of his nature, yea, and lay them forth and exercise them to the utmost on our behalf? Was it because we were better than others? did his will? walked with him? Did he declare we should be his people upon condition we did so and so? Not on any of these or the like grounds of proceeding doth he do this, but merely because "it pleaseth him to make us his people;" Matt. xi. 26. And shall we think that he who took us to be his people notwithstanding our universal alienation from him, on the account of his own good pleasure, which caused him to make us his people (that is, obedient, believing, separated from the world), will upon any account, being himself unchangeable, not preserve us in, but reject us from, that condition?

Thus is God's mercy in not forsaking his people resolved into its original principle,—namely, his own good pleasure in choosing of them, carried on by the goodness and unchangeableness of his own nature to the appointed issue.

This, then, is the sum of this argument: What work or design the Lord entereth upon merely from his own good pleasure, or solely in answer to the purpose which he purposeth in himself and engageth to continue in mercy for his name's sake, thereby taking upon him to remove or prevent whatever might hinder the accomplishment of that purpose, work, or design of his, that he will abide in unchangeable to the end; but this is the state of the Lord's undertaking, to abide with his people, as hath been manifested at large.

Let us add in the next place that of the psalmist: Ps. xxiii. 4, 6, "Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort

me. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever." The psalmist expresseth an exceeding confidence in the midst of most inexpressible troubles and pressures. He supposes himself "walking through the valley of the shadow of death." As "death" is the worst of evils, and comprehensive of them all, so the "shadow" of death is the most dismal and dark representation of those evils to the soul, and the "valley" of that shadow the most dreadful bottom and depth of that representation. This, then, the prophet supposed that he may be brought into. A condition wherein he may be overwhelmed with sad apprehensions of the coming of a confluence of all manner of evils upon him,—and that not for a short season, but he may be necessitated to walk in them, which denotes a state of some continuance, a conflicting with most dismal evils, and in their own nature tending to death,—is in the supposal. What, then, would he do if he should be brought into this estate? Saith he, "Even in that condition, in such distress, wherein I am, to my own and the eyes of others, hopeless, helpless, gone, and lost, 'I will fear no evil.'" A noble resolution, if there be a sufficient bottom and foundation for it, that it may not be accounted rashness and groundless confidence, but true spiritual courage and holy resolution. Saith he, "It is because the Lord is with me." But, alas! what if the Lord should now forsake thee in this condition, and give thee up to the power of thine enemies, and suffer thee, by the strength of thy temptations, wherewith thou art beset, to fall utterly from him? Surely then thou wouldst be swallowed up for ever; the waters would go over thy soul, and thou must for ever lie down in the shades of death. "Yea," saith he, "but I have an assurance of the contrary; 'goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life.'"

"But this," say some, "is a very desperate persuasion. If thou art sure that goodness and mercy shall follow thee all the days of thy life, then live as thou pleasest, as loosely as flesh can desire, as wickedly as Satan can prompt thee to. Certainly this persuasion is fit only to ingenerate in thee a high contempt of humble and close walking with God. What other conclusion canst thou possibly make of that presumption but only this, 'I may, then, do what I please, what I will; let the flesh take its swing in all abominations, it matters not, goodness and mercy shall follow me.'" "Alas!" saith the psalmist, "these thoughts never come into my heart. I find this persuasion, through the grace of Him in whom it is effectual, to ingenerate contrary resolutions. This is that which I am, upon the account hereof, determined on, 'I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.' Seeing 'goodness and mercy shall follow me,' I will dwell in his house; and seeing they shall follow me 'all the days of my life,' I will dwell in his house for ever."

There are, then, these two things in this last verse pregnant to the purpose in hand:—

1. The psalmist's assurance of the presence of God with him "for ever," and that in kindness and pardoning mercy, upon the account of his promise unto him. "Goodness or benignity," saith he, "shall follow me into every condition, to assist me and extricate my soul, even out of the valley of the shadow of death." A conclusion like that of Paul, 2 Tim. iv. 18, "The Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto his heavenly kingdom." Having, verse 17, given testimony of the presence of God with him in his great trial, when he was brought before that devouring monster Nero, giving him deliverance, he manifesteth in verse 18 that the presence of God with him was not only effectual for one or another deliverance, but that it will keep him "from every evil work," not only from the rashness, cruelty, and oppression of others, but also from any such way or work of his own which should lay a bar against his enjoyment of and complete preservation unto that heavenly kingdom whereunto he was appointed.

What reason, now, can be imagined why other saints of God, who have the same promises with David and Paul, established unto them in the hand of the same Mediator, being equally taken into the same covenant of mercy and peace with them, may not make the same conclusion of mercy with them,—namely, "That the mercy and goodness of God will follow them all the days of their lives; that they shall be delivered from every evil work, and preserved to God's heavenly kingdom?" 2 Cor. i. 20. To fly here to *immediate revelation*, as though God had particularly and immediately assured some persons of their perseverance, which begat in them a confidence wherein others may not share with them, besides that it is destructive of all the vigour and strength of sundry, if not all the arguments produced against the saints' perseverance, it is not in this place of any weight, or at all relative to the business in hand; for evident it is that one of them, even David, is thus confident upon the common account of God's relation unto all his saints, as he is their shepherd, one that takes care of them, and will see, not only whilst they abide with him, that they shall have pasture and refreshment, but also will find them out in their wanderings, and will not suffer any of them to be utterly lost. And he is a shepherd equally in care and love to every one of his saints as he was to David. He gives them all "the sure mercies of David," even the mercy contained and wrapped up in the promise that was given to them, and what by virtue thereof he did enjoy, with what he received from God in that covenant relation wherein he stood, Isa. lv. 3. And for Paul, it is most evident that he grounded his confidence and consolation merely upon the general promise of the presence of God with his, that

he will "never leave them nor forsake them," but be their God and "guide even unto death;" neither is there the least intimation of any other bottom of his consolation herein. Now, these being things wherein every believer, even the weakest in the world, hath an equal share and interest with Paul, David, or any of the saints in their generations, what should lie in their way but that they also may grow up to this assurance, being called thereunto? I say, they may *grow* up unto it. I do not say that every believer can with equal assurance of mind thus make his boast in the Lord and in the continuance of his kindness to him,—the Lord knows we are oftentimes weak and dark, and at no small loss even as to the main of our interest in the promises of God;—but there being an equal certainty in the things themselves of which we speak, it being as certain that the goodness and mercy of God shall follow them all their days as it did David, and as certain that God will deliver them from every evil work and preserve them to his heavenly kingdom as he did Paul, they also may grow up unto, and ought to press after, the like assurance and consolation with them. Whom goodness and mercy shall follow all their days, and who shall be of God preserved from every evil work, they can never fall totally and finally out of the favour of God. That this is the state and condition of believers is manifested from the instances given of David and Paul, testifying their full persuasion and assurance concerning that condition on grounds common to them with all believers.

2. The conclusion and inference that the psalmist makes, from the assurance which he had of the continuance of the goodness and kindness of God unto him, followeth in the words insisted on: "All the days of his life he would dwell in the LORD'S house." He would for ever give up himself unto his worship and service. "Seeing this is the case of my soul, that God will never forsake me, let me answer this love of God in my constant obedience." Now, this conclusion follows from the former principle upon a twofold account:—

(1.) As it is a *motive* unto it. The continuance of the goodness and kindness of God unto a soul is a constraining motive unto that soul to continue with him in love, service, and obedience; it works powerfully upon a heart any way ennobled with the ingenuity of grace to make a suitable return, as far as possibly it can, to such eminent mercy and goodness. I profess I know not what those men think the saints of God to be, who suppose them apt to make conclusions of wantonness and rebellion upon the account of the steadfastness of the love and kindness of God to them. I shall not judge any as to their state and condition; yet I cannot but think that such men's prejudices and fulness of their own persuasions do exceedingly interpose in their spirits from receiving that impression of this grace of God which in its own nature it is apt to give, or

it would be impossible they should once imagine that of itself it is apt to draw the spirits of men into a neglect and contempt of God.

(2.) As the *end* of God, intended in giving that assurance, to the effecting whereof it is exceedingly operative and effectual. So you have it, Luke i. 74, 75. This is the intendment of God in confirming his oath and promise unto us, "That he may grant unto us, that we being delivered out of the hand of our enemies might serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness all the days of our lives."

Now, though these forementioned, with many other texts of Scripture, are plain, evident, and full to the business we have in hand, yet the adversaries of this truth having their hands so full with them that are commonly urged that they cannot attend unto them, I shall not need to spend time in their vindication from exceptions which none that I know have as yet brought in against them (though, upon their principles, they might possibly be invented), but shall leave them to be mixed with faith, according as God by his Spirit shall set them home upon the souls of them who do consider them.

The whole of Ps. cxxv. might, in the next place, be brought in to give testimony to the truth in hand. I shall only take a proof from the first two verses of it: "They that trust in the LORD shall be as mount Zion, which cannot be removed, but abideth for ever. As the mountains are round about Jerusalem, so the LORD is round about his people from henceforth even for ever." Whereunto answereth that of Ps. xxxvii. 28, "The LORD loveth judgment, and forsaketh not his saints; they are preserved for ever;" as also Deut. xxxiii. 3, "Yea, he loveth his people; all his saints are in thy hand." In the verses named, I shall a little fix upon two things conducing to our purpose, which are evidently contained in them:—

1. A promise of God's everlasting prosence with his saints, believers, them that trust in him, and their steadfastness thereupon: "They shall be as mount Zion, which cannot be removed;" and that because "the LORD is round about them," and that "for ever."

2. An allusive comparison of both these, both their stability and God's presence with them, given for the encouragement of weak believers, with special regard to the days wherein the promise was first made, which actually also belongs to them on whom the ends of the world are fallen. The psalmist bids them, as it were, lift up their eyes, and look upon mount Zion and the hills that were round about Jerusalem, and tells them that God will as certainly and assuredly continue with them and give them establishment as those hills and mountains which they beheld round about abide in their places; so that it shall be as impossible for all the powers of hell to remove them out of the favour of God as for a man to pluck up mount Zion by the roots, or to overturn the foundations of the mountains that stand round about Jerusalem. It is true, the Holy Ghost hath special

regard to the oppositions and temptations that they were to undergo from men, but bears also an equal regard to all other means of separating them from their God. It would be a matter of small consolation unto them that men should not prevail over them for ever, if in the meantime there be other more close and powerful adversaries, who may cast them down with a perpetual destruction. Some few considerations of the intendment of the place will serve for the enforcing of our argument from this portion of Scripture:—

1. That which is here promised the saints is a perpetual preservation of them in that condition wherein they are; both on the part of God, "he is round about them from henceforth even for ever;" and on their parts, "they shall not be removed,"—that is, from the state and condition of acceptation with him wherein they are supposed to be,—but abide for ever, and continue therein immovable unto the end. It is, I say, a plain promise of their continuance in that condition wherein they are, with their safety from thence, and not a promise of some other good thing provided that they continue in that condition. Their being compared to mountains and their stability, which consists in their being and continuing so, will admit no other sense. As mount Zion abides in its condition, so shall they; and as the mountains about Jerusalem continue, so doth the Lord his presence unto them.

2. That expression which is used, verse 2, is weighty and full to this purpose, "The LORD is round about his people from henceforth even for ever." What can be spoken more fully, more pathetically? Can any expression of men so set forth the truth which we have in hand? The Lord is round about them, not to save them from this or that incursion, but from all; not from one or two evils, but from every one whereby they are or may be assaulted. He is with them, and round about them on every side, that no evil shall come nigh them. It is a most full expression of universal preservation, or of God's keeping his saints in his love and favour, upon all accounts whatsoever; and that not for a season only, but it is "henceforth," from his giving this promise unto their souls in particular, and their receiving of it in all generations, according to their appointed times, "even for ever."

Some few exceptions, with a great surplusage of words and phrases, to make them seem other things than what have been formerly insisted on again and again, are advanced by Mr Goodwin, to overturn this Zion and to cast down the mountains that are about Jerusalem, chap. xi. sect. 9, pp. 230–232. The sum of our argument from hence, as of the intendment of this place, is this: Those whom the Lord will certainly preserve for ever in the state and condition of trusting in him, they shall never be forsaken of him nor separated from him. The latter clause of this proposition is that which we

contend for, the whole of that whose proof is incumbent on us. Of this the former part is a sufficient *basis* and foundation, being comprehensive of all that is or can be required to the unquestionable establishment thereof, [which] from the letter of the text we *assume*. But God will certainly preserve for ever all his saints that put their trust in him, in their so doing, that they shall not be altered or cast down from that state and condition. Change but the figurative expressions in the text, and the allusions used for the accommodation of their faith in particular to whom this promise was first given, into other terms of a direct and proper significancy, and the text and the assumption of our argument will appear to be the same; whence the conclusion intended will undeniably follow. Unto this clear deduction of the truth contended for from this place of Scripture, the discourse ensuing, in the place mentioned, is opposed:—

1. "The promise only assures them that trust in the Lord that they shall be preserved, but not at all that they that trust in him shall be necessitated to do so still, or that so they shall do. So Paul saith, 'It was in my heart to live and die with the Corinthians;' but doubtless with this proviso, that they always continued such as they then were, or as he apprehended them to be, when he so wrote to them."

Ans. I must be forced to smite this evasion once and again before we arrive at the close of this contest, it being so frequently made use of by our adversary, who without it knows himself not able to stand against the evidence of any one promise usually insisted on. This is the substance of all that which, with exceeding delightful variety of expressions, is a hundred times made use of: "The promise is conditional, and made to those that trust in the Lord, and is to be made good only upon the account of their continuing so to do; but that they shall so do, that they shall continue to trust in the Lord, that is wholly left to themselves, and not in the least undertaken in the promise." And this is called a "*discharging* or dismissing of places of Scripture from the service whereunto, contrary to their proper sense and meaning, they are pressed," a "delivering them from the bearing the cross of this warfare," with such like imperial terms and expressions. To speak in the singleness of our spirit, we cannot see any one of the *discharged soldiers* returning from the camp, wherein they have long served for the safety and consolation of them that do believe. Particularly, this Scripture detests the gloss with violence imposed on it, and tells you that the end for which the God of truth sent it into this service, wherein it abides, is to assure them that trust in the Lord that they shall be preserved in that condition to the end; that in the condition of trusting and depending on God, they shall be as Zion, and the favour of God unto them as the immovable mountains,—he will for ever be with them and about them; and

that all this shall certainly come to pass. Christ [David?] does not say that they shall be as established mountains if they continue to trust in the Lord, but they shall be so in their trusting, abiding for ever therein, through the safeguarding presence of God. For their being *necessitated* to continue trusting in the Lord, there is not any thing in [the] text, or in our argument from thence, or in the doctrine we maintain, that requires or will admit of any such proceeding of God as by that expression is properly signified. Indeed, there is a contradiction in terms, if they are used to the same purpose. To trust in the Lord is the *voluntary, free act* of the creature. To be necessitated unto this act and in the performance of it, so that it should be done necessarily as to the manner of its doing, is wholly destructive to the nature and being of it. That God can effectually and infallibly as to the event cause his saints to continue trusting in him without the least abridgment of their liberty, yea, that he doth so eminently by heightening and advancing their spiritual liberty, shall be afterward declared. If by "Necessitated to continue trusting," not the manner of God's operation with and in them for the compassing of the end proposed, and the efficacy of his grace, whereby he doth it (commonly decried under these terms), be intended, but only the certainty of the issue, rejecting the impropriety of the expression, the thing itself we affirm to be here promised of God. But it is urged,—

2. "That this promise is not made unto the persons of any, but merely unto their qualifications; like that, 'He that believeth shall be saved;' it is made to the grace of trusting, obedience, and walking with God: for threatenings are made to the evil qualifications of men."

Ans. This it seems, then, we are come unto (and what farther progress may be made the Lord knows): The gracious promises of God, made to his church, his people, in the blood of Jesus, on which they have rolled themselves with safety and security in their several generations, are nothing but bare declarations of the will of God, what he allows and what he rejects, with the firm concatenation that is between faith and salvation, obedience and reward. And this, it seems, is the only use of them: which if it be so, I dare boldly say that all the saints of God from the foundation of the world have most horribly abused his promises, and forced them to other ends than ever God intended them for. Doubtless all those blessed souls who are fallen asleep in the faith of Jesus Christ, having drawn refreshment from these breasts of consolation, could they be summoned to give in their experience of what they have found in this kind, would with one mouth profess that they found far more in them than mere conditional declarations of the will of God; yea, that they received them in faith as the engagement of his heart and

good-will towards them, and that he never failed in the accomplishment and performance of all the good mentioned in them. Neither will that emphatical expression in the close of the second verse (which being somewhat too rough for our author to handle, he left it quite out) bear any such sense. That the promises of the covenant are made originally to persons, and not to qualifications, hath been in part already proved, and shall be farther evinced, God assisting, as occasion shall be offered, in the ensuing discourse. The promises are to Abraham and his seed; and some of them, as hath been declared, are the springs of all qualifications whatever that are acceptable unto God. What be the qualifications of promises of opening blind eyes, taking away stony hearts, etc., hath not as yet been declared. But it is farther argued,—

3. "That this and the like promises are to be interpreted according to the rule which God hath given for the interpretation and understanding of his threatenings unto nations about temporal things, and his promises that are of the same import, which we have, Jer. xviii. 7, 8, plainly affirming that all their accomplishment dependeth on some conditions in the persons or nations against whom they are denounced."

Ans. God forbid! Shall those promises which are branches of the everlasting covenant of grace, called "better promises" than those of the old covenant, upon the account of their infallible accomplishment, ratified in the blood of Christ, made "yea and amen"[1] in him, the witness of the faithfulness of God to his church and grand supporter of our faith, "exceeding great and precious,"[2]—shall they be thought to be of no other sense and interpretation, to make no other revelation of the Father unto us, but in that kind which is common to threatenings of judgments (expressly conditional) for the deterring men from their impious and destructive courses? I say, God forbid! To put it, then, to an issue: God here promiseth that they who have trust in him shall never be removed. What, I pray, is the condition on which this promise doth depend? "It is," say they who oppose us in this, "if they continue trusting in him." That is, if they be not removed; for to trust in him is not to be removed: if, then, they be not removed, they shall not be removed! And is this the mind of the Holy Ghost? Notwithstanding all the rhetoric in the world, this promise will stand, for the consolation of them that believe, as the mountains about Jerusalem, that shall never be removed.

In some it is said to be "a promise of abiding in happiness, not in faith." But it plainly appears to be a promise of abiding in trusting the Lord, which comprehends both our faith and happiness.

Obj. "It is not promised that they who once trust in the Lord shall abide happy though they cease to trust in him."

[1] Heb. viii. 6; 2 Cor. i. 20. [2] 2 Pet. i. 4.

Ans. It is a promise that they shall not cease to trust in him.

Obj. "It is not said that they shall be necessitated to abide trusting in him."

Ans. No; but it is that they shall be so far assisted and effectually wrought upon as certainly to do it.

Obj. "It is no more than the apostle says to the Corinthians, 2 Cor. ii. 3; which frame towards them he would not continue should they be changed and turned into idolaters and blasphemers."

Ans. 1. The promises of God and the affections of men are but ill compared. 2. Paul loved the Corinthians whilst they were such as he mentioned. God promiseth his grace to believers, that they may continue such as he loves.

Obj. "All the promises are made to qualifications, not to persons."

Ans. Prove that, and, 1. Take the case in hand; and, 2. Cast down the church to the ground, it having no one promise, on that account, made unto it, as consisting of Abraham's seed.

And so this witness also is freed from all exceptions put in against it, and appears with confidence to give in its testimony to the unchangeableness of God unto believers.

I shall, in the next place, adjoin another portion of Scripture, of the same import with those foregoing, wherein the truth in hand is no less clearly, and somewhat more pathetically and convincingly, expressed than in that last mentioned. It is Isa. liv. 7–10, "For a small moment have I forsaken thee; but with great mercies will I gather thee. In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment; but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the LORD thy Redeemer. For this is as the waters of Noah unto me: for as I have sworn that the waters of Noah should no more go over the earth; so have I sworn that I would not be wroth with thee, nor rebuke thee. For the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed; but my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, saith the LORD that hath mercy on thee." This place I have mentioned before, but only as to one special inference from one passage in the words; I shall now use the whole for the confirmation of the general truth we plead for. The words are full, plain, suited to the business in hand. No expressions of our finding out can so fully reach the truth we assert, much less so pathetically work upon the affections of believers, or so effectually prevail on their understandings to receive the truth contained in them, as these words of God himself, given us for these ends, are suited to do. Go to men whose minds are in any measure free from prejudice, not forestalled with a contrary persuasion or furnished with evasions for the defence of their opinions, and ask whether God doth not in these words directly and positively promise to those to whom he speaketh, that he will always

continue his kindness to them to the end, and that for the days of eternity his love shall be fixed on them; and I no way doubt but they will readily answer, "It is so indeed; it cannot be denied." But seeing we have to deal, as with our own unbelieving hearts, so with men who have turned every stone to prejudge this testimony of God, the words must a little more narrowly be considered, and the mind of the Holy Ghost inquired into.

Verse 7, mention is made of the desertion of the church by the eclipsing of the beams of God's countenance, and the inflicting of some great affliction for a season; in opposition unto which momentary desertion, in that and in the beginning of the 8th verse, he giveth in consolation from the assurance of the great mercies and everlasting kindness wherein he abideth to do them good: "With everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee;"—"I will pardon, pity, and heal thee with that mercy which floweth from love, which never had beginning, that never shall have ending, that cannot be cut off, 'everlasting kindness.' Bear with patience your present desertion, your present trials, whatever they are that befall you; they are but for a season, but 'for a moment,' and these also are consistent with that mercy and kindness which is everlasting and turneth not away." If this mercy and kindness dependeth on any thing in us, and is resolved lastly thereinto, which may alter and change every moment, —as our walking with God in itself considered, not relating to the unchangeableness of his purpose and the efficacy of his promised grace, is apt to do,—what opposition can there be betwixt that desertion wherewith they are exercised and the kindness wherewith they are embraced, as to their continuance? As that is said to be for a little while, for "a moment," so this also may be of no longer abode. It may possibly be as Jonah's gourd, that grew up in the morning, and before night was withered. What, then, shall become of the foundation of that consolation wherewith God here refresheth the souls of his people, consisting in the continuance of his kindness in an antithesis to the momentariness of their desertion?

Lest that any should call this into question (as our unbelieving hearts are very apt and skilful in putting in pleas against the truth of the promises of God and their accomplishment towards us), verse 9, the Lord farther confirmeth the assurance formerly given, and removeth those objections to which, through the sophistry of Satan and the sottishness of our own hearts, it may seem to be liable. "This is," saith he, "as the waters of Noah." God's dealing with them in that mercy which floweth from his everlasting kindness is like his dealing with the world in the matter of the waters of Noah, or the flood wherewith it was drowned and destroyed, when he, with his, were saved in the ark. He calleth upon his children to consider his dealings with the world in respect of the flood: "I have sworn,"

saith he (that is, "I have entered into a covenant to that end," which was wont to be confirmed with an oath, and God being absolutely faithful in his covenant is said to swear thereunto, though there be no express mention of any such oath), "that the world should no more be so drowned as then it was. Now," saith God, "see my faithfulness herein; it hath never been drowned since, nor ever shall be. With equal faithfulness have I engaged, even in covenant, that that kindness which I mentioned to thee shall always be continued, 'so that I will not be wroth to rebuke thee;' that is, so as utterly to cast thee off, as the world was when it was drowned." But some may say, "Before the flood the earth was filled with violence and sin; and should it be so again, would it not bring another flood upon it? Hath he said he will not drown it, notwithstanding any interposal of sin, wickedness, or rebellion whatsoever?" "Yea," saith he, "such is my covenant. I took notice in my first engagement therein, that the 'imagination of man's heart would be evil from his youth,' Gen. viii. 21, and yet I entered into that solemn covenant. So that this exemption of the world from a universal deluge is not an appendix to the obedience of the world, which hath been, upon some accounts, more wicked since than before (as in the crucifying of Christ, the Lord of glory, and in rejecting of him being preached unto them), but it solely leaneth upon my faithfulness in keeping covenant, and my truth in the accomplishment of the oath that I have solemnly entered into. So is my kindness to you. I have made express provision for your sins and failings therein; such I will preserve you from as are inconsistent with my kindness to you, and such will I pardon as you are overtaken withal." When you see a universal deluge covering the face of the earth (that is, God unfaithful to his oath and covenant), then, and not till then, suppose that his kindness can be turned from believers.

Something is excepted against this testimony, chap. xi. sect. 4, p. 227, but of so little importance that it is scarce worth while to turn aside to the consideration of it. The sum is, "That this place speaketh only of God's faithfulness in his covenant; but that this should be the tenor of the covenant, that they who once truly believe should by God infallibly, and by a strong hand, against all interposals of sin, wickedness, or rebellion, be preserved in such a faith, is not, by any word, syllable, or iota, intimated."

Ans. This is that which is repeated "usque ad nauseam;" and were it not for variety of expressions, wherewith some men do abound, to adorn it, it would appear extremely beggarly and overworn. But a sorry shift (as they say) is better than none, or doubtless in this place it had not been made use of; for,—

1. This testimony is not called forth to speak immediately to the continuance of believers in their faith, but to the continuance an

unchangeableness of the love of God to them, and consequently only to their preservation in faith upon that account.

2. It is not only assumed at a cheap and very low rate or price, but clearly *gratis* supposed, that believers may make such "interposals of sin, wickedness, and rebellion," in their walking with God, as should be inconsistent with the continuance of his favour and kindness to them, according to the tenor of the covenant of grace. His kindness and favour being to us *extrinsical*, our sins are not opposed unto them *really* and *directly*, as though they might effectually infringe an act of the will of God, but only *meritoriously*. Now, when God saith that he will continue his kindness to us for ever notwithstanding the demerit of sin, as is plainly intimated in that allusion to the waters of Noah, for any one to say that they may fall into such sins and rebellions as that he cannot but turn his kindness from them, is a bold attempt for the violation of his goodness and faithfulness, and a plain begging of the thing in question. Certainly it is not a pious labour, to thrust with violence such supposals into the promises of God as will stop those breasts from giving out any consolation, when no place or room for them doth at all appear, there being not one word, syllable, iota, or tittle, of any such supposals in them.

3. The exposition and gloss that is given of these words,—namely, "That upon condition of their faithfulness and obedience, which, notwithstanding any thing in this or any other promise, they may turn away from, he will engage himself to be a God to them," —is such as no saint of God, without the help of Satan and his own unbelief, could affix to the place.

4. Neither will that at all assist which is affirmed, namely, "That in all covenants,—and his promise holdeth out a covenant,—there must be a condition on both sides:" for, we willingly grant that in his covenant of grace God doth promise something to us, and requireth something of us, and that these two have mutual dependence one upon another; but we also affirm that in the very covenant itself God hath graciously promised to work effectually in us those things which he requireth of us, and that herein it mainly differeth from the covenant of works, which he hath abolished. But such a covenant as wherein God should promise to be a God unto us upon a condition by us and in our own strength to be fulfilled, and on the same account continued in unto the end, we acknowledge not, nor can, whilst our hearts have any sense of the love of the Father, the blood of the Son, or the grace of the Holy Spirit, the fountains thereof. Notwithstanding, then, any thing that hath been drawn forth in opposition to it, faith may triumph, from the love of God in Christ, held out in this promise, in the full assurance of an everlasting acceptance with him; for God, also, willing yet more abundantly to give in consolation in this place

to the heirs of promise, assureth the stability of his love and kindness to them by another allusion: Verse 10, "The mountains," saith he, "shall depart, and the hills be removed; but my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, saith the LORD that hath mercy on thee." He biddeth them consider the mountains and hills, and suppose that they may be removed and depart. "Suppose that the most unlikely things in the world shall come to pass, whose accomplishment none can judge possible while the world endureth, yet my kindness to thee is such as shall not fall within those supposals which concern things of such an impossibility." I am exceeding conscious that all paraphrasing or exposition of the words that may be used, for their accommodation to the truth we plead for, doth but darken and eclipse the light and glory which in and by themselves, to a believing soul, they cast upon it. Now, lest any should think that there is the least tendency in such promises as these, as held out to believers, to turn them aside from close walking with God, before I enter upon the consideration of any other (this seeming of all others most exposed to exceptions of that nature), I shall give some few observations that may a little direct believers, to whom I write, and for whose sake this task is undertaken, unto the right improvement of them.

The genuine influence which this and the like promises have upon the souls of the saints, is mightily to stir them up unto, and to assist them in answering, what lieth in them, that inexpressible love and kindness which their God and Father in Jesus Christ holdeth out unto their hearts in them. This the apostle inferreth from them, 2 Cor. vii. 1, "Having these promises" (that is, those especially mentioned in the words preceding the conclusion and the inference the apostle here maketh, chap. vi. 16, 18, "I will dwell in them, and walk in them, and will be a Father unto them, and they shall be my sons and daughters"), therefore, saith he, "let us cleanse ourselves from all pollution of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God." Universal purity, holiness, and close walking with God, are that which these promises do press unto and naturally promote in the hearts of believers. And in 2 Peter i. 3–6, that apostle pursueth the same at large, "God hath called us to glory and virtue; hath given us exceeding great and precious promises; that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. Besides this, giving all diligence," etc. "The exceeding great and precious promises" which are given unto us in our calling are bestowed for this end, that "by them we may be made partakers of the divine nature." They have no tendency to communicate to us the nature of the devil, and to stir us up to rebellion, uncleanness, and hatred of the God of all that love that is in them; but lie, indeed, at the bottom, the root, and foundation of

the practice and exercise of all those graces which he enumerates, and, from the receiving of those promises, exhorts us to in the following verses. Some, I confess, do or may "turn the grace of God into lasciviousness,"—that is, the doctrine of grace and of pardon of sin in the blood of Jesus Christ,—and so the mercy mentioned in such promises as these, merely as in them it is *mentioned;* grace and mercy *communicated* cannot be turned into wantonness. But what are they that do so? "Ungodly men, men of old ordained to condemnation," Jude 4. Paul rejecteth any such thought from the hearts of believers: Rom. vi. 1, 2, "Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? God forbid!" Nay, suppose that that natural corruption, that flesh and blood, that is in believers, be apt to make such a conclusion as this, "Because God will certainly abide with us for ever, therefore let us walk carelessly, and do him all the despite we can," these promises being not made for the use and exalting of the flesh, but being given to be mixed with faith, which is carefully to watch against all abusing or corrupting of that love and mercy which is held out unto it, flesh and blood can have no advantage given unto it thereby; as shall afterward be more fully and clearly demonstrated. The question is, then, what conclusion faith doth, will, and ought to make of these promises of God, and not what abuse the flesh will make of them. Let, then, the meanest and weakest faith in all the world that is true and saving speak for itself, whether there be any thing in the nature of it that is apt to make such conclusions as these: "My God and Father in Jesus Christ hath graciously promised, in his infinite love and goodness to me, through him in whom he is well pleased, that he will be my God and guide for ever, that he will never forsake me, nor take his kindness from me to eternity. And he hath done this although that he saw and knew that I would deal foolishly and treacherously, that I would stand in need of all his goodness, patience, and mercy, to spare me and heal me, promising also to keep me from such a wicked departure from him as should for ever alienate my soul from him: therefore come on, let me continue in sin; let me do him all the dishonour and despite that I can. This is all the sense that I have of his infinite love, this is all the impression that it leaveth upon me, that I need not love him again, but study to be as vile and as abominable in his sight as can possibly be imagined." Certainly there is not any "smoking flax," or any "bruised reed," there is not a soul in the world whom God in Christ hath once shined upon, or dropped the least dram of grace into his heart, but will look on such a conclusion as this as a blast of the bottomless pit, a detestable dart of Satan, which it is as proper for faith to quench as any other abomination whatever. Let, then, faith in reference unto these promises have its perfect work, not abiding in a naked contemplation of

them, but mixing them with itself, and there will be undoubtedly found the improvement before mentioned for the carrying on of godliness and gospel obedience in the hearts of believers. But this I shall have occasion to speak to more afterward.

Hos. ii. 19, 20, is pertinent also to the same purpose: "I will betroth thee unto me for ever; yea, I will betroth thee unto me in righteousness, and in judgment, and in loving-kindness, and in mercies. I will even betroth thee unto me in faithfulness: and thou shalt know the LORD." The words themselves as they lie in the text do directly confirm our assertion. The relation whereinto God here expresseth that he will and doth take his people is one of the most near and eminent which he affordeth to them, a conjugal relation,—he is and will be their husband; which is as high an expression of the covenant betwixt God and his saints as any that is or can be used. Of all covenants that are between sundry persons, that which is between man and wife is the strongest and most inviolable. So is this covenant expressed Isa. liv. 5, "Thy Maker is thine husband; the LORD of hosts is his name." And this relation he affirmeth shall continue for ever, upon the account of those properties of his which are engaged in this his gracious undertaking to take them to himself therein. He doth it "in righteousness, and in judgment, and in loving-kindness, and in mercies, and in faithfulness." So that if there be not something in the context or words adjoining that shall with a high hand turn us aside from the first, immediate, open, and full sense of these words, the case is undoubtedly concluded in them. This, then, we shall consider, and therefore must look a little back into the general design of the whole chapter, for the evasion of "qualifications" will not here serve; God betrothed persons, not qualifications.

There are two parts of the chapter:—1. That from the beginning to verse 14 containeth a most fearful and dreadful commination and threatening of the judgments of the Lord against the whole church and commonwealth of the Jews, for their apostasy, idolatry, and rebellion against him. It is not an affliction or a trial, or some lesser desolation, that God here threateneth them withal, but utter destruction and rejection as to all church and political state. He will leave them neither substance nor ornament, state nor worship, describing the condition which came upon them at their rejection of the Lord Jesus Christ. Left they must be as in the day that God first looked on them,—poor, naked, in their blood, unpitied, formed neither into church-state nor commonwealth. "So will I make them," saith the Lord. And this dispensation of God the prophet expresseth with great dread and terror to the end of verse 13.

2. The second part of the chapter is taken up and spent, from verse 14 to the end, in heavenly and gracious *promises* of the con-

version of the true Israelites, the seed according to the promise of God, of the renovation of the covenant with them, and blessing them with all spiritual blessings in Jesus Christ unto the end. And hereof there are these four parts:—

(1.) A heavenly promise of their *conversion* by the gospel; which he demonstrateth and setteth out by comparing the spiritual deliverance therein to the deliverance which they had by a high hand from Egypt, verses 14, 15.

(2.) The delivery of them so converted from *idolatry*, false worship, and all those ways whereby God was provoked to cast off their forefathers, attended by their obedience in close walking with God for ever, verses 16, 17.

(3.) The *quietness* and *peace* which they shall enjoy, being called and purged from their sins before mentioned; which the Lord expresseth by his making a covenant with the whole creation in their behalf, verse 18.

(4.) A discovery of the fountain of the mercies before mentioned, with those also which afterward are insisted on, to wit, *the everlasting covenant of grace*, through which God will with all faithfulness and mercy take them to himself, verses 19, 20, to the end.

Before we farther open these particulars, some objections must be removed that are laid to prevent the inference intended from these words, chap. xi. sect. 8, p. 229. It is objected,—

1. "The promise of the betrothing here specified is made unto the entire body and nation of the Jews, as well unbelievers as believers, as appeareth by the carriage of the chapter throughout."

Ans. The "carriage of the chapter throughout" is a weak proof of this assertion, and no doubt fixed on for want of particular instances to give any light unto it. Neither doth the "carriage of the chapter throughout" intimate any such thing in the least, but expressly manifesteth the contrary. It is universal desolation and utter rejection that is assigned as the portion of unbelievers as such all along this chapter. This promise is made to them whom "God allureth into the wilderness, and there speaketh comfortably to them;" which, what it doth import, shall be afterward considered. Yea, and which is more, the words of verse 23, which run on in the same tenor with the promises particularly insisted on, and beyond all exception are spoken to and of the same persons, are applied by the apostle Paul, not to the whole nation of the Jews, idolaters and unbelievers, but to them that were brought in unto the Lord Christ, and obtained the righteousness of faith, when the rest were hardened, Rom. ix. 26. From verse 24 to verse 29, the apostle, by sundry instances from the scriptures of the Old Testament, manifesteth that it was a remnant of Israel "according to the election of grace" to whom the promise was made: "To us, whom God hath called, not to the

Jews only, but also to the Gentiles; for so," saith he, "it is in Osee" (instancing in the passage we insist on), "I will call them my people which were not my people; and her beloved which was not beloved. And it shall come to pass, that in the place where it was said unto them, Ye are not my people, there shall they be called the children of the living God;"—which he farther confirmeth by a testimony out of Isa. x. 22, 23, manifesting that it is but "a remnant" that is intended. Wherefore it is objected,—

2. "That the promise is conditional, and the performance of it and of the mercies mentioned in it suspended upon the repentance of that people, especially of their idolatry, to the true and pure worship of God, as appeareth, verses 14, 16, 17; which plainly showeth that it was made as well, nay, rather to those that were wicked and idolatrous amongst this people than unto others, as being held forth unto them chiefly for this end, to woo them away from their idols unto God."

Ans. I hope the people of God will more steadfastly abide by their interest in the sweetness, usefulness, and consolation of this promise, than to throw it away upon such slight and atheological flourishes; for,—

1. Is there any tittle, iota, or word, in the whole text, to intimate that this promise is conditional, and dependeth on the people's forsaking their idolatry? The 14th, 16th, and 17th verses are urged for proof thereof. God, indeed, in these verses doth graciously promise that, from the riches of the same grace whence he freely saith that "he will betroth them to himself," he will convert them, and turn them away from their idolatry and all their sins; but that that should be required of them as a condition whereon God will enter into covenant with them, there is nothing in the whole context, from verse 14 and downwards, that intimateth it in the least or will endure to be wrested to any such sense, it holding out several distinct acts of the same free grace of his unto his people.

2. That this is a promise of *entering into covenant* with them cannot be denied. Now, that God should require their repentance as an antecedaneous, previous qualification to his receiving them into covenant, and yet in the covenant undertake to give them that repentance, as he doth in promising them to take away their hearts of stone and give them new hearts of flesh, is a direct contradiction, fit only for a part of that divinity which is in the whole an express contradiction to the word and mind of God.

3. Neither can it be supposed as a *conditional promise*, held out to them as a motive to work them from their idolatry, when, antecedently thereunto, God hath expressly promised to do that for them (verses 16, 17) with as high a hand and efficacy of grace as can be well expressed.

Wherefore, these being exceptions expressly against the scope of the whole, it is objected,—

3. "That it cannot be proved that this promise properly or directly intendeth the collation of spiritual or heavenly good things unto them, so as of temporal; yea, the situation of it betwixt temporal promises immediately both behind and before it persuadeth the contrary. Read the context from verse 8 to the end of the chapter."

Ans. The other forts being demolished, this last is very faintly defended,—"It cannot be proved that it doth so properly or directly." But if it doth intend spirituals *properly* and *directly*, though not *so* properly or directly, the case is clear. And that it doth properly intend spirituals, and but secondarily and indirectly temporals, as to sundry limitations, is most evident; for,—

1. The very *conjugal expression* of the love of God here used manifesteth it beyond all contradiction to be a promise of the covenant: "I will betroth thee unto me;"—"I will take thee unto me in wedlock covenant." What! in temporal mercies? is that the tenor of the covenant of God? God forbid!

2. The foundations of these mercies, and the principles from whence they flow, are "loving-kindness," and "mercies," and "faithfulness" in God, which are fixed upon them and engaged unto them whom he thus taketh into covenant; and surely they are spiritual mercies.

3. The mercies mentioned are such as never had a literal accomplishment to the Jews in temporals, nor can have; and when things promised exceed all accomplishment as to the outward and temporal part, it is the spiritual that is principally and mainly intended. And such are these, verse 18, "I will break the bow, and the sword, and the battle out of the earth, and make them to lie down safely." How, I pray, was this fulfilled towards them, whilst they lived under the power of the Persian, Grecian, and Roman empires, to their utter desolation? And verse 23, he telleth them that he will "sow them unto himself in the earth, and have mercy upon them;" which, as I said before, Paul himself interpreteth and applieth to the special mercies of faith and justification in the blood of Christ. So that both the verses going before and those that follow after, to the consideration whereof we are sent, contain directly and properly spiritual mercies, though expressed in words and terms of things of a temporal importance.

Thus, notwithstanding any exception to the contrary, the context is clear, as it was at first proposed. Let us, then, in the next place, consider the intendment of God in this promise, with that influence of demonstration which it hath upon the truth we are in the consideration of, and then free the words from that corrupting gloss which is endeavoured to be put upon them.

In the first [place] I shall consider,—1. The *persons* to *whom* this

promise is made; 2. The *nature* of the promise itself; 3. The great *undertaking* and *engagement of the properties of God* for the accomplishment of his promise.

1. The *persons* here intimated are such as are under the power and enjoyment of the grace and kindness mentioned in verses 14–18. Now, because a right understanding of the grace of those promises addeth much to the apprehension of the kindness of these particulars insisted on, the opening of those words may be thought necessary.

Verse 14, they are those whom God "allureth into the wilderness," and "speaketh comfortably unto them;" he allureth and persuadeth them. There is an allusion in the words to the great original promise of the conversion of the Gentiles, and the way whereby it shall be done. Gen. ix. 27, God persuades Japheth to dwell in the tents of Shem. Their alluring is by the powerful and sweet persuasion of the gospel; which here is so termed to begin the allegory of betrothing and marriage, which is afterward pursued. It is God's beginning to woo the soul by his ambassadors. God persuadeth them into the wilderness,—persuadeth them, but yet with mighty power, as he carried them of old out of Egypt; for thereunto he evidently alludeth, as in the next verse is more fully expressed. Now, the wilderness condition whereinto they are allured or persuaded by the gospel compriseth two things:—(1.) *Separation;* (2.) *Entanglement.*

(1.) *Separation.* As the Israelites in the wilderness were separated from the residue of the world and the pleasures thereof, "the people dwelling alone, being not reckoned among the nations," having nothing to do with them, so God separateth them to the love of the gospel from their carnal contentments, and all the satisfactions which before they received in their lusts, until they say to them, "Get you hence; what have we to do with you any more?" They are separated from the practice of them, and made willing to bid them everlastingly farewell. They see their Egyptian lusts lie slain or dead, or at least dying, by the cross of Christ, and desire to see them no more.

(2.) *Entanglement,* as the Israelites were in the wilderness. They knew not what to do, nor which way to take one step, but only as God went before them, as he took them by the hand, and taught them to go. God bringeth them into a lost condition; they know not what to do, nor which way to take, nor what course to pitch upon. And yet in this wilderness state, God doth commonly stir up such gracious dispositions of soul in them as himself is exceedingly delighted withal: hence he doth peculiarly call this time "a time of love," which he remembereth with much delight. All the time of the saint's walking with him, he taketh not greater delight in a soul, when it cometh to its highest peace and fullest assurance, than when it is seeking after him in its wilderness entanglement. So he ex-

presseth it, Jer. ii. 2, "Thus saith the LORD; I remember thee, the kindness of thy youth, the love of thine espousals, when thou wentest after me in the wilderness, in a land that was not sown." And what he here affirmeth holds proportion therewithal. The time of their being in the wilderness was the time of their espousals, and so it is here the time of the Lord's betrothing the soul to himself, the wooing words whereby he doth it being intimated in the next verse; for,—

[1.] He "speaketh comfortably to them," speaketh to their hearts good words, that may satisfy their spirits and give them rest and deliverance out of that condition. What it is that God speaketh, when he speaketh comfortably to the very hearts of poor souls, he telleth you, Isa. xl. 1, 2, "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned." It is the pardon of iniquity that inwrappeth all the consolation that a poor wilderness soul, separated and entangled, is capable of or doth desire. And this is the first description of the persons to whom this promise is given: They are such as God hath humbled and pardoned, such as he hath converted and justified, whom he hath allured into the wilderness, and there spoken comfortably to them.

[2.] Verse 15, the Lord promiseth to this called and justified people plenty of *spiritual, gospel mercies*, which he shadoweth out with typical expressions of temporal enjoyments, and that with allusion to their deliverance of old from Egypt, in three particulars:—

1*st*. In general, he will give them "vineyards from thence" (that is, from the wilderness), as he did to them in Canaan, when he brought them out of the wilderness. This God often mindeth them of, that he gave them "vineyards which they planted not," Deut. vi. 11; and he here setteth out the plenty of gospel grace, which they never laboured for, which he had provided for them, under that notion. He giveth them of the wine of the gospel, his Holy Spirit.

2*dly*. In particular, he compares his dealings with them to his dealings in the valley of Achor, a most pleasant and fruitful valley that was near Jericho, being the first the Israelites entered into when they came out of the wilderness, which is mentioned as a fruitful place, Isa. lxv. 10. And therefore this is said to be to them "a door of hope," or an entrance into that which they hoped for, it being the first fat, fruitful, and fertile place that the Israelites came into in the land of Canaan, and so an entrance into the good land which they hoped for, answering their expectation to the uttermost. In the promise of the abundance of spiritual mercies and grace which God hath prepared for his, he recalleth into their minds the consideration of the refreshment which the Israelites, after so long an abode in the "waste and howling wilderness," had and took in the fruitful, plenteous "valley of Achor." Such is the spiritual provision that

God hath made for the entertainment of poor souls whom he hath allured into the wilderness, and there spoken comfortably to them. Being called and pardoned, he leadeth them to sweet and pleasant pastures, treasures of grace and mercy, which he hath laid up for them in Jesus Christ. He giveth them of the first-fruits of heaven, which is a door of hope unto the full possession, Rom. viii. 23.

3*dly*. [He alludes] to the songs and rejoicings which the church had when they sung one to another upon the destruction of the Egyptians, at their delivery out of the bondage of Egypt. As then they sung for joy, Exod. xv. 1–21, upon the sense of that great and wonderful deliverance which God had wrought for them, so shall their hearts be affected with gospel mercies, pardoning, healing, purging, and comforting grace, which in Jesus Christ he will give in unto them.

These, then, are the three things which are promised to them that come out of the wilderness:—(1.) Gospel refreshment, in pouring out of the Spirit upon them; (2.) The first-fruits of heaven, a door of hope; (3.) Spiritual joy, in the destruction and conquest of sin.

This, then, is the sum of this second part of that description which we have of those persons to whom the promise under consideration is given: They are such as, being called and pardoned, are admitted to that portion in the wonderful marvellous provision of gospel mercies and grace which in Jesus Christ he hath provided for them, with that joy and consolation which thereon doth ensue.

In the following verses you have a fuller description of these persons, upon a twofold account:—First, By their delivery from idolatry and false worship, verses 16, 17, which is particularly and peculiarly insisted on, because that eminently was the sin for which those mentioned in the beginning of the chapter were utterly rejected. God will preserve these, as from the sin of idolatry, so from any other that should procure their utter rejection and desolation, as that of idolatry had formerly done in respect of the only carnal Jews. Secondly, By their protection against their enemies, verse 18. And these are the persons to whom this promise is made,—converted, justified, sanctified, and purified persons.

2. We may take a little view of the *nature* of the promise itself: "I will," saith the Lord, "betroth thee unto me for ever." There is in this promise a twofold opposition to that rejection that God had before denounced unto the carnal and rebellious Jews:—

(1.) In the *nature* of the thing itself, unto the divorce that God gave them: Verse 2, "She is not my wife; neither am I her husband." But to these saith God, "I will betroth them unto myself;"—"They shall become a wife to me, and I will be a husband unto them." And this also manifesteth that they are not the same persons to whom that threatening was given that are principally intended in this promise; for if God did only take them again whom he had once put

away, there would have been no need of any betrothing of them anew. New "sponsalia" are not required for such an action.

(2.) In the *continuance of the rejection of the first, and the establishment of the reception of the latter*, at least in respect of his abiding with these and those; with those for a season, but unto these he saith, "I will betroth them unto me FOR EVER." God's betrothing of believers is his actual taking them into a marriage covenant with himself, to deal with them in the tenderness, faithfulness, and protection of a husband. So is he often pleased to call himself in reference to his church. I shall not go forth to the consideration of this relation that God is pleased to take the souls of saints into with himself. The eminent and precious usefulness and consolation that floweth from it is ready to draw me out thereunto, but I must attend to that which I principally aim at,—namely, to evince that God hath undertaken that he and believers will and shall abide in this relation to the end, that he will for ever be a husband to them, and that in opposition to his dealing with the carnal church of the Jews, to whom he was betrothed as to ordinances, but rejected them, and said he was not their husband as to peculiar grace. To whom God continueth to be a husband, to them he continueth the loving-kindness, good-will, and protection of a husband,—the most intense, useful, fruitful, that can be imagined. This, then, will he do to believers, and that for ever.

3. Now, because sundry objections may be levied against the accomplishment of this engagement of God, upon the account of our instability and backsliding, the Lord addeth the manner of his entering into this engagement with us, obviating and preventing, or removing, all such objections whatever; which is the third thing proposed to consideration,—namely, the engagement of the properties of God for the accomplishment of this promise.

Five properties doth the Lord here mention, to assure us of his constancy in this undertaking of his grace, and of the steadfastness of the covenant he hath taken his people into; and they are, "righteousness, judgment, loving-kindness, mercies," and "faithfulness;" whose efficacy, also, in reference unto their abiding with him whom he doth betroth to himself, he mentioneth in the close of verse 20, "Thou," saith he, "shalt know the LORD." I shall not insist on the particular importance of the several expressions whereby the Lord hath set forth himself and his goodness here unto us. It is plain that they are all mentioned to the same end and purpose,—namely, to give assurance unto us of the unchangeableness of this work of his grace, and to prevent the objections which the fears of our unbelieving hearts, from the consideration of our weaknesses, ways, and walkings, temptations, trials, and troubles, would raise upon it. The Lord, when he betroths us to himself, sees and knows what we are, what we will be, and how we will provoke the eyes of his

glory. He sees that if we should be left unto ourselves, we would utterly cast off all knowledge of him and obedience unto him. "Wherefore," saith he, "'I will betroth thee unto me in righteousness and in judgment;' allowing full measure for all thy weaknesses, that they shall not dissolve that union I intend." As if a prince should go to take to him in marriage a poor deformed beggar, who being amazed with his kindness, and fearing much lest he should be mistaken, and account her otherwise than indeed she is, which when it is discovered will be her ruin, she plainly telleth him she is poor, deformed, and hath nothing in the world that may answer his expectation, and therefore she cannot but fear that when he knoweth her thoroughly indeed, he will utterly cast her off: but he thereupon replieth, "Fear no such thing; what I do, I do in righteousness and judgment, knowingly of thee and thy condition, and so as that I will abide by it." Perhaps, as some think, by this "betrothing us in righteousness," the Lord may intimate his bestowing upon us righteousness, yea, his becoming in Jesus Christ our righteousness, to supply that utter want which is in us of that which is acceptable unto him, Isa. xlv. 24. Now, because we are not only unmeet to be at first accepted into any such terms of alliance with the Lord, but also shall certainly in the carrying of it on behave ourselves foolishly and frowardly, unanswerable to his loving-kindness, so that he may justly cast us off for ever, he telleth us farther that he betroths us to himself "in loving-kindness and in mercies," knowing that in entering into this alliance with us he maketh work for his tenderest bowels of compassion, his pity and pardoning mercy. In his continuance in this relation, whatever his kindness, patience, and pardoning mercy can be extended unto, that he will accomplish and bring about. But will not the Lord, when he pardons once and again, at length be wearied by our innumerable provocations, so as to cast us off for ever? "No," saith he; "this will I do in faithfulness." He doubleth the expression of his grace, and addeth a property of his nature that will carry him out to abide by his first love to the utmost: "I will," saith he, "even betroth thee unto myself in faithfulness." His firmness, constancy, and truth, in all his ways and promises, will he use in this work of his grace, Deut. xxxii. 4. But perhaps, notwithstanding all this, the heart is not yet quiet, but it feareth itself and its own treachery, lest it should utterly fall off from this gracious husband; wherefore, in the close of all, God undertaketh for them also that no scruple may remain why our souls should not be satisfied with the sincere milk that floweth from this breast of consolation. "Thou shalt," saith he, "know the LORD." This, indeed, is required, that under the accomplishment of this gracious promise you know the Lord,—that is, believe and trust, and obey the Lord; and saith he, "Thou shalt do it. I will by my grace keep alive in thy heart

(as a fruit of that love wherewith I have betrothed thee to myself) that knowledge, faith, and obedience, which I require of thee."

This, then, is some part of that which in this promise the Lord holdeth out unto us and assureth us of. Notwithstanding his rejection of the carnal Jews, yet for his elect, both the Jews and Gentiles, he will so take them into a marriage covenant with himself that he will continue for ever a husband unto them, undertaking also that they shall continue in faith and obedience, knowing him all their days. And of all this he effectually assureth them upon the account of his righteousness, judgment, loving-kindness, mercy, and faithfulness.

I cannot but add, that if there were no other place of Scripture in the whole book of God to confirm the truth we have in hand but only this, I should not doubt (the Lord assisting) to close with it upon the signal testimony given unto it thereby, notwithstanding all the specious oppositions that are made thereunto.

For the close, I shall a little consider that lean and hungry exposition of these words which is given in the place before mentioned, chap. xi. sect. 8, p. 229, "I will betroth them unto me in righteousness, and in judgment, and in loving-kindness, and mercy." So the words are expressed, in a different character, as the very words of the promise in the text:—"Thee," that is, the church, is changed into "Them,"—that is, the Jews and their children or carnal seed, as a little before was expressed; and then that emphatical expression, "for ever," is quite thrust out of the text, as a stubborn word, not to be dealt withal upon any fair terms. Let us see, then, how that which remaineth is treated and turned off. "'I will betroth thee;' that is, 'I will engage and attempt to insure both them and their affections to me, by all variety of ways and means that are proper and likely to bring such a thing to pass.'" But who knoweth not that this is wooing, and not betrothing? We need not go far to find out men learned in the law to inform us that to try and attempt to get and assure the affections of any one is not a betrothment. This, then, is the first part of this exposition: "'I will betroth;' that is, 'I will woo and essay, attempt and endeavour, to get their affections;'" which, besides the forementioned absurdity, is attended with another sore oversight, to wit, that God promiseth to do this very thing in the last words of verse 20, which is affirmed that he doth but attempt to do.

To proceed: He saith, "I will do this, by showing myself just and righteous unto them, in keeping my promise concerning their deliverance out of captivity at the end of seventy years." So, then, in this new paraphrase, "I will betroth thee" (that is, the election of Jews and Gentiles) "to myself for ever in righteousness," is, "I will essay to get their affections by showing myself righteous in the promise

of bringing the Jews out of captivity." That this promise is not made to the body of the Jews returning out of captivity was before demonstrated. The righteousness here mentioned is that which God will and doth exercise in this very act of betrothing, and not any other act of it, which he will make use of to that purpose. God engageth to betroth them to himself in righteousness, using and exercising his righteousness in that very act of his love and grace to them; and this is now given in an alluring them to love him by appearing righteous in bringing them out of captivity!

The like interpretation is given of the other expressions following: "'Judgment,'—it is," saith he, "by punishing and judging their enemies, and destroying them that led them into captivity, and held them in bondage and subjection; and 'loving-kindness' is his giving them corn, wine, oil, peace, and plenty; and 'mercy,' in pardoning of daily sins and infirmities; and 'faithfulness' is" he knoweth not what. This is made the sum of all: "God, by doing them good with outward mercies, and pardoning some sins and infirmities, will morally try to get their affections to himself." "Virgula Pictoris!" 1. It is not an expression of God's attempting to get their love, but of the establishing and confirming of his own. 2. That God should morally try and essay to do and effect or bring about any thing, which yet he doth not, will not, or cannot, compass and effect, is not to be ascribed to him without casting the greatest reproach of impotency, ignorance, changeableness, upon him imaginable. 3. God promising to betroth us to himself, fixing his love on us that we shall know him, so fixing our hearts on him; to say that this holdeth out only the use of some outward means unto us, enervateth the whole covenant of his grace wrapped up in these expressions. So that, all things considered, it is not a little strange to me that any sober, learned man should ever be tempted so to wrest and corrupt, by wrested and forced glosses, the plain words of Scripture, wherein, whatever is pretended, he cannot have the least countenance of any expositor of note that went before him. Although we are not to be pressed with the name of Tarnovius, a Lutheran, a professed adversary in this cause, yet let his exposition of that place under consideration be consulted with, and it will plainly appear that it abideth not in any compliance with that which is here by our author imposed on us.

The promises we have under consideration looking immediately and directly only to one part of that doctrine whose defence we have undertaken,—to wit, the constancy and unchangeableness of the grace of justification, or God's abiding with his saints, as to his free acceptance of them and love unto them, unto the end,—I shall not insist on many more particulars.

John x. 27–29 closeth this discourse: "My sheep hear my voice,

and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand."

In the verse foregoing, our Saviour renders a reason why the Pharisees, notwithstanding all his preaching to them and the miracles he wrought among them, yet believed not, when sundry others, to whom the same dispensation of outward means was afforded, did hear his voice and did yield obedience thereunto; and this he telleth us was because they were not of his sheep, such as were given him of his Father, and for whom, as the good Shepherd, he laid down his life, verses 14, 15. Upon the close of this discourse, he describeth the present condition of his sheep, and their preservation in that condition, from the power of himself and his Father engaged thereunto. He layeth their abiding with him as his sheep upon the omnipotence of God; which, upon account of the constancy of his love towards them, he will exercise and exert as need shall be in their behalf. There are many emphatical expressions both of their continuance in the obedience of faith, and of his undertaking for their preservation therein. The latter I at present only intend. Saith he, 1. "I know them;" 2. "I give them eternal life;" 3. "They shall never perish;" 4. "No man shall pluck them out of my hand;" 5. "My Father is omnipotent, and hath a sovereignty over all, and he taketh care of them, and none shall take them out of his hand." It is not easy to cast these words into any other form of arguing than that wherein they lie, without losing much of that convincing evidence that is in them. This you may take for the sum of their influence into the truth in hand: Those whom Christ so owneth as to take upon him to give them eternal life, and by his power and the power of his Father to preserve them thereunto,—which power shall not, nor possibly can be, prevailed against, so that the end aimed at to be accomplished therein should not be brought about,—those shall certainly be kept for ever in the favour and love of God, they shall never be turned from him. Such is the case of all believers; for they are all the sheep of Christ, they all hear his voice and follow him.

Some few things, to wrest this gracious assurance given believers of the everlasting good-will of God and Christ unto them, are attempted by Mr Goodwin, chap. x. sect. 37, p. 203.

1. He granteth that there is an engagement of the "mighty power of God for the safeguarding of the saints, as such or remaining such, against all adverse powers whatever, but nowhere for the compelling or necessitating of them to persevere and continue such is there any thing in the Scripture."

Ans. The sum is, "If they will continue saints, God will take care that, notwithstanding all opposition, they shall be saints still." Very well, if they will be so, they shall be so; but "that they shall continue to be so, that is not promised." The terms of "compelling or necessitating" are cast in merely to throw dirt upon the truth, lest, the beauty shining forth too brightly, there might have been danger that the very exceptor himself could not have borne it. We say not that God by his power compelleth men to persevere; that is, maketh them do it whether they will or no. Perseverance being an habitual grace in their wills, it is a gross contradiction once to imagine that men should be compelled thereunto. But this we say, that, by the almighty power of his Spirit and grace, he confirmeth his saints in a voluntary abiding with him all their days. Having made them a willing people in the day of the power of Christ towards them, he preserveth them unto the end. Neither are they wrapped up by the power of God into such a necessity of perseverance as should obstruct the liberty of their obedience, the necessity that regardeth them in that condition respecting only the issue and end of things, and not their manner of support in their abiding with God. And it is not easy to conjecture why our author should so studiously avoid the grant of a promise of final perseverance in these words, who, in his next observation upon them, affirmeth that "they respect the state of the saints in heaven, and not at all those that are on earth;" I mean, that part of those words which expresseth their preservation and safeguarding by the power of God. So that this is fancied, perhaps, even to be the condition of the saints in heaven, that God will there preserve them whilst they continue saints, but that they shall so do there is not any assurance given or to be had. It is marvellous, if this be so, that in so large and vast a space of time we yet never heard of any of those holy ones that were cast out of his inheritance, or that forfeited his enjoyment. But let us hear what is farther asserted. He addeth, by way of answer,—

2. "The security for which our Saviour engageth the greatness of his Father's power unto his sheep is promised unto them, not in order to the effecting or procuring their final perseverance, but rather by way of reward to it."

Ans. But what tittle is there, I pray you, in the whole context to intimate any such thing? what insinuation of any such condition? "They hear my voice, and they follow me;" that is, "They believe in me, and bring forth the fruits of their believing in suitable obedience," as these words of "hearing" and "following" do imply. Saith our Saviour, "These shall not perish, the power of my Father shall preserve them." "That is," saith our author, "in case *they persevere to the end*, then *God will preserve them.*" Clearly our Saviour undertaketh that believers shall not perish, and that his power and his

Father's are engaged for that end; which is all we assert or have need to do.

2. "That this promise of safety made to his sheep by Christ doth not relate to their state or condition in this present world, but to that of the world to come. 'My sheep hear my voice, and follow me;' in which words of 'hearing' and 'following' him he intimateth or includeth their perseverance, as appeareth by the words immediately following, 'And I give them eternal life.'"

Ans. This, I confess, is to the purpose, if it be true; but being so contrary to what hath been (I had almost said universally) received concerning the mind of Christ in this place, we had need of evident concluding reasons to enforce the truth of this gloss or interpretation. For the present, I shall give you some few inducements or persuasions why it seemeth altogether unsuitable to the mind of our blessed Saviour, that this engagement of his Father's power and his own should be shut out from taking any place in the kingdom of grace:—

1. Observe that there is a great opposition to be made against the saints in that condition wherein they are promised to be preserved. This is supposed in the words themselves: "None shall pluck them out of my hand. My Father is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand;"—as if he should have said, "It is true, many enemies they have, great opposition will there be and arise against them on all hands, but preserved they shall be in the midst of them all." But now, what enemies, what opposition, will there be and arise against the saints in heaven? The Holy Ghost telleth us, "The last enemy is death," and that at the resurrection that shall be "utterly swallowed up in victory," that it shall never lift up the head; *there* they rest from their labours who die in the Lord. Yea, it is exceeding ridiculous to suppose that the saints need assurance of the engagement of the omnipotency of God for their safeguarding in heaven against all opposition, when they are assured of nothing more than that there they shall not be liable to the least opposition or obstruction in their enjoyment of God unto all eternity.

2. Our Saviour here describeth the present condition of his sheep in a way of opposition to them that are not his sheep: his hear his voice, the others do not; and his shall be preserved when the others perish. The Pharisees believed not, and, as he told them, "they died in their sins;" his sheep heard him, and were preserved in their obedience. It is, then, evidently the deportment of Christ towards, and his care of, his sheep in this world, in a contradistinction to them who are not his sheep, among whom they live, that is here set forth.

3. The very context of the words enforceth this sense: "They follow me, and I give unto them eternal life;"—"I do it; that is the work I

have in hand." Take "eternal life" in the most comprehensive sense, for that which is to be enjoyed in heaven (though, doubtless, it compriseth also the life of grace which here we enjoy, John xvii. 3), what is that which our Saviour undertaketh to give believers, and that they may be sure that they shall be preserved to the enjoyment of? When he telleth them they shall not perish, is that not perishing not to be cast out of heaven when they come thither,—not to be deprived of eternal life after they have entered into the fulness of it? or rather, that they shall not fail or come short of it, and so perish? And this is that which the power of Father and Son is engaged to accomplish,—namely, that believers perish not by coming short of that eternal life which is the business of Christ to give unto them. If any one reason of weight or importance that hath the least pregnancy with truth be offered to the contrary, we shall renounce and shake off the power of the former reasons which we have insisted on; though without offering the greatest violence imaginable to truth itself it cannot be done. It is said that "by these words, 'They hear my voice, and follow me,' Christ doth intimate or include their perseverance." To say a thing is "intimated or included" is of small power against so many express reasons as we have induced to the contrary. But will this be granted, that wherever the saints are said to hear the voice of Christ, perseverance is included?—we shall quickly have a fresh supply of Scripture proofs for the demonstration of the truth in hand. But what attempt is made for the proof hereof? "It is so because the words immediately following are, 'I give unto them eternal life,' which presuppose their final perseverance;" and this must be so, because it is so said. "I give unto them eternal life," is either an intimation of what he doth for the present, by giving them a spiritual life in himself, or a promise he will do so with respect to eternal life consummated in heaven, which promise is everywhere made upon believing; and it is a promise *of perseverance*, not given *upon perseverance*. Neither is there any thing added in the words following to confirm this uncouth wresting of the mind of our Saviour, but only the assertion is repeated, "that God will defend them in heaven against all opposition." Here, where their oppositions are innumerable, they may shift for themselves; but when they come to heaven, where they shall be sure to meet with no opposition at all, there the Lord hath engaged his almighty power for their safety against all that shall rise up against them. And this is, as is said, the "natural and clear disposition of the context in this place;" but "Nobis non licet," etc.

There are sundry other texts of Scripture which most clearly and evidently confirm the truth we have in hand, which are all well worth our consideration for our consolation and establishment, as also something of our labour and diligence, to quit them from those

glosses and interpretations (which turn them aside from their proper intendment) that are by some put upon them; amongst which, 1 Cor. i. 8, 9; Phil. i. 6; 1 Thess. v. 24; John v. 24, ought to have place. But because I will not insist long on any particulars of our argument from the promises of God, here shall be an end.

CHAPTER VII.

THE MEDIATION OF CHRIST.

The consideration of the oath of God deferred—The method first proposed somewhat waived—The influence of the mediation of Christ into God's free and unchangeable acceptance of believers proposed—Reasons of that proposal—Of the oblation of Christ—Its influence into the saints' perseverance—All causes of separation between God and believers taken away thereby—Moral and efficient causes thereby removed—The guilt of sin, how taken away by the death of Christ—Of the nature of redemption—Conscience of sin, how abolished by the sacrifice of Christ—Heb. x. 3, 4, 14; Dan. ix. 24 opened—Rom. viii. 34, deliverance from all sin, how by the death of Christ—The law innovated in respect of the elect—The vindictive justice of God satisfied by the death of Christ—How that is done—Wherein satisfaction doth consist; absolute, not conditional—The law, how fulfilled in the death of Christ—The truth of God thereby accomplished; his distributive justice engaged—Observations for the clearing of the former assertions—Whether any one for whom Christ died may die in sin—The necessity of faith and obedience—The reasons thereof—The end of faith and holiness—The first argument for the proof of the former assertions concerning the fruit and efficacy of the death of Christ, Heb. ix. 14—The second—The third—The compact between the Father and Son about the work of mediation—The fourth—Good things bestowed on them for whom Christ died antecedently to any thing spiritually good in them—The Spirit so bestowed, and faith itself—The close of those arguments—Inferences from the foregoing discourse—The efficacy of the death of Christ, and the necessity of faith and obedience, reconciled—Sundry considerations unto that end proposed: 1. All spiritual mercies fruits of the death of Christ; 2. All the fruits of Christ's death laid up in the hand of God's righteousness; 3. The state of them for whom Christ died not actually changed by his death; 4. On what account believing is necessary—Christ secures the stability of the saints' abiding with God—What is contrary thereunto; how by him removed—The world overcome by Christ, as managed by Satan in an enmity to the saints—The complete victory of Christ over the devil—The ways whereby he completes his conquest—The rule of Satan in respect of sinners twofold: 1. Over them; 2. In them—The title of Satan to a rule over men judged and destroyed by Christ—The exercise of all power taken from him—The works of Satan destroyed by Christ in and for his elect—The Holy Spirit procured by the death of Christ—The giving of the Spirit the great promise of the new covenant—This farther proved and confirmed—The perpetual residence of the Holy Spirit with believers proved by the threefold testimony of Father, Son, and Spirit—Isa. lix. 21, the testimony of the Father proposed and vindicated—Our argument from hence farther cleared—This promise absolute, not conditional—No condition rationally to be affixed

to it—The import of those words, "As for me"—To whom this promise is made—That farther cleared—Not to all Israel according to the flesh—Mr G.'s objections answered—The testimony of the Son given to the perpetual abiding of the Spirit with believers—John xiv. 16 opened—The promise in those words equally belonging to all believers—Mr G.'s objections answered—No promise of the Spirit abiding with believers on his principle allowed—The promise given to the apostles personally, yet given also to the whole church—Promises made to the church made to the individuals whereof it is constituted—The giving of this promise to all believers farther argued from the scope of the place, and vindicated from Mr G.'s exceptions—The third testimony, of the Holy Spirit himself, proposed to consideration—His testimony in sealing particularly considered, 2 Cor. i. 22; Eph. i. 13, iv. 30—Of the nature and use of sealing amongst men—The end, aim, and use, of the sealing of the Holy Ghost—Mr G.'s objections and exceptions to our argument from that sealing of the Spirit considered and removed—The same farther carried on, etc.

THERE remains nothing for the confirmation of the first branch or part of the truth proposed, but only the consideration of *the oath of God;* which, because it ought certainly to be "an end of all strife," I shall reserve the handling of it to the close of the whole, if God be pleased to carry us out thereunto, that we may give the oath of God its due honour, of being the last word in this contest.

The order of our method first proposed would here call me to handle *our steadfastness with God*, and *the glory created* upon our grace of sanctification; but because some men may admire, and ask whence it is that the Lord will abide so steadfast in his love towards believers as hath been manifested upon several accounts that he will, besides what hath been said before of his own goodness and unchangeableness, etc., I shall now add that outward consideration which lies in *the mediation of Christ*, upon the account whereof he acts his own goodness and kindness to us with the greatest advantage of glory and honour to himself that can be thought upon. Only I shall desire the reader to observe, that the Lord Jesus is an undertaker in this business of perfecting our salvation and safeguarding our spiritual glory not in one regard and respect only. There is one part of his engagement therein which, under the oath of God, is the close of the whole, and that is his becoming a *surety to us* of his Father's faithfulness towards us, and a *surety for us* of our faithfulness to him: so that, upon the whole matter, the business on each side as to security will be found knit up in him, and there we shall do well to leave it, though the handling of that suretiship of his be not of our present consideration. Men will scarce dispute him out of his faithfulness. "Henceforth he dieth no more; death hath no dominion over him; he sits at the right hand of God, expecting to have his enemies made his footstool." This, then, I will do, if God permit. And [as] for the steadfastness of his saints in their abiding with God, I shall, I fear, no otherwise insist peculiarly upon it but

as occasion shall be ministered by dealing with our adversary as we pass on.

That which I shall now do is, to consider the influence of the priesthood of Christ in those two grand acts thereof, his *oblation* and *intercession*, into the perseverance of saints, according to that of the apostle: Heb. vii. 25, "Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them." And I will do it the more carefully, because though it be one of the greatest strengths of our cause, yet I shall walk in a path wherein none shall meet me, for the most part of the way, to make any opposition.

My entrance into the consideration of the procurement of our glory by Christ shall be with that whereby he came into his own, namely, his oblation, which hath a twofold influence into the perseverance of the saints, or into the safeguarding of their salvation to the utmost:—

I. By removing and taking out of the way all causes of separation between God and those that come unto God by him;[1] that is, all believers. Now, these are of two sorts: 1. That which is *moral*, and procuring such separation or distance, which is *the guilt of sin;* 2. That which is *efficient* and working, as *the power of Satan and of sin;*—the first of these being that alone for which it may be supposed that God will turn from believers, and the latter that alone whereby they may possibly be turned from him. Now, that both these are so taken out of the way by the oblation of Christ that they shall never actually and eventually work or cause any total or final separation between God and believers, shall be demonstrated:—

1. He hath so taken away *the guilt of sin* from believers, from them that come to God by him, that it shall not prevail with the Lord to turn from them.[2] He hath "obtained eternal redemption for us," Heb. ix. 12, eternal and complete; not so far and so far, but "eternal redemption" hath he obtained,—redemption that shall be completed, notwithstanding any interveniencies imaginable whatever. This redemption, which he hath obtained for us, and which by him we obtain, the apostle tells us what it is, and wherein it doth consist: Eph. i. 7, "In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins." He hath obtained for us everlasting forgiveness of sins. As to the complete efficiency of the procuring cause thereof, absolutely perfect and complete in its own kind, not depending on any condition in any other whatsoever for the producing the utmost effect intended in it, there shall be no after-reckoning or account for sin between God and them for whom he

[1] Isa. lix. 2.
[2] Eph. i. 10, ii. 13–16; Col. i. 20–22; 2 Cor. v. 19, 20; 1 John i. 7.

so obtains redemption. And the apostle, in the 10th chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews, disputes at large this difference between the typical sacrifices and the sacrifice of the blood of Christ. He tells you those were "offered year by year," and could "never make the comers to God by them perfect," or acquit them from sin, for then they "should have had no more conscience of sin," being once purged; but now, saith he, "there was a remembrance made again of sins every year," verses 1–4. If sin had been taken away, there would have been no more conscience of it; that is, no such conscience as upon the account whereof they came for help unto or healing by those sacrifices,—no more conscience *condemning for sin*. Conscience judges according to the obligation unto punishment which it apprehends upon it. Conscience of sin,—that is, a *tenderness to sin*, and a condemnation of sin,—still continues after the taking of the guilt of it away; but conscience disquieting, judging, condemning the person for sin, that vanisheth together with the guilt of it:[1] and this is done when the sacrifice for sin is perfect and complete, and really attains the end for which it was instituted. And if any sacrifice for sin whatever do not completely take away that sin for which the oblation is made, and the atonement thereby, so that no after-charge might come upon the sinner, it is of necessity that that sacrifice be renewed again and again. The reason the apostle gives of the repetition of the legal sacrifices is, that they made not the comers to them perfect; that is, as to the taking away of their sins, and giving them entire and complete peace thereupon. All this, the apostle informs us, was done in the sacrifice of Christ: Verse 14, "By one offering he hath for ever perfected" (or made perfect that work for them as to this business of conscience for sin) "them that are sanctified." His one offering perfectly put an end to this business, even the difference between God and us upon the account of sin; which if he had not done, it would have been necessary that he should have been often offered, his sacrifice having not obtained the complete end thereof. That the efficacy of this sacrifice of his cannot depend on any thing foreign unto it shall be declared afterward; also, that the necessity of our faith and obedience, in their proper place, is not in the least hereby impaired, shall be manifested. That they may have a proper place, efficacy, and usefulness, and not be conditions whereon the effects of the death of Christ are suspended, as to their communication unto us, is by some denied; how weakly, how falsely, will then also appear. Now, this Christ doth for all that are sanctified, or dedicated, or consecrated unto God (which is almost the perpetual sense of that word in this epistle), in and by that offering of his. And this the apostle farther confirms from the consideration of the new covenant with us, ratified in, and whose effects were pro-

[1] Rom. v. 1.

cured by, the blood-shedding and offering of Christ: Verse 17, "Their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more." Saith God, "Upon the account of the offering of Christ, there is an end of that business and that controversy which I have had with those sanctified ones; and therefore let them, as to this, as to the making satisfaction for sin, trouble themselves no more, to think of thousands of rams, or the like, for there is no more offering for sin required," Mic. vi. 6, 7. And on this foundation I may say there doth not remain any such guilt to be reckoned unto believers as that with regard thereunto God should forsake them utterly, and give them over unto everlasting ruin. And this is the sum of the apostle's discourse in that chapter, as it looks upon the matter under present consideration: That sacrifice which so taketh away the sins of them for whom it is offered as that thereupon they should be perfect, or perfectly acquitted of them, and have no more conscience (which is a judgment of a man's self answering to the judgment of God concerning him) of sin, so to judge him and condemn him for it as not to have remedy of that judgment or condemnation provided in that sacrifice,—that, I say, doth so take away the guilt of sin as that it shall never separate between God and them for whom and whose sin it was offered; but such was the sacrifice of Christ: *ergo*, etc. The reason of the consequence is clear from the very form of the proposition, and nothing is assumed but what is the express testimony of the apostle in that and other places.

So Dan. ix. 24. The design in the death of Christ is "to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness." Christ makes an end of sin: not that there should be no more sin in the world, for there is yet sinning to the purpose, in some respect much more than before his death,[1] and there will be so to eternity, if those under the ultimate sentence may be thought to sin; but he makes an end of it as to the controversy and difference about it between God and them for whom he died, and that by making reconciliation on the part of God, atoning him towards us[2] (which atonement we are persuaded to accept), and by bringing in for us a righteousness which is everlasting and will abide the trial, which God will certainly accept.[3] Now, when God is satisfied for sin, and we are furnished with a righteousness exactly complete and answering to the utmost of his demand, whence can any more contest arise about the guilt of sin, or the obligation of the sinner unto punishment that from the justice and law of God doth attend it? This also the apostle urgeth, Rom. viii. 34, "Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died." He argueth from the death of Christ to the ablation or removal of condemnation for sin, because by his death he hath "made

[1] Heb. vi. 4–6, x. 26–31. [2] Rom. v. 10. [3] Isa. xxvii. 3–5, xlv. 24, 25.

an end of sin," as was showed, "and brought in everlasting righteousness;" Heb. x. 14–18. To suspend the issue of all these transactions between God and the Mediator upon conditions by us to be accomplished, not bestowed on us, not purchased for us, and as to their event uncertain, is disadvantageously to beg the thing in question.

Now, because it appears that, notwithstanding the death of Christ, many for whom he died are kept a long season under the guilt of sin,[1] and are all of them born in a condition of wrath, Eph. ii. 3, I shall crave leave a little to insist on this instance, and to show that notwithstanding the truth thereof, yet the guilt of sin is so taken away from all those for whom Christ died, by his death, that it shall never be a cause of everlasting separation between God and them. In the obedience and death of Christ, whereby, as a completely sufficient and efficacious means, he made way for the accomplishment of his eternal purposes, in such paths of infinite wisdom as brought in all the good he aimed at by it, in that order which the very frame and nature of things by him appointed required for the exaltation of his glory, God is satisfied, well pleased, and resolved that he will not take his course at law against those in the behalf of whom he died, 2 Cor. v. 18–20. Though an arrest was gone forth against all mankind, yet the Lord suspended by his sovereignty the utmost execution of it, that room and space might be given, according to the eternal thoughts of his heart, for the deliverance of some. A reprieve is granted mankind, out of reasons and for purposes of his own. After the sentence of death was denounced against them, God being pleased to magnify his grace, according to his eternal counsel and purpose in Jesus Christ, innovates the law, as to the obligation of it unto punishment, on the behalf of some, by the interposition of the Son of his love in such a way as to undergo what was due unto those on whose behalf the interposition was made.[2] And by this undertaking of Christ, in the very first notion of it, as it was satisfactory, thus much is done and accomplished:—

(1.) The *vindictive justice of God* is satisfied. That is, whereas such is the natural right, sovereignty, and dominion of God over his creatures, and such his essential perfections of holiness, purity, and righteousness, that if his creatures cast off his yoke and their dependence on him (which they do by every sin, what in them lieth), it is then of indispensable necessity that he render unto that sin or sinner guilty thereof a meet recompense of reward;[3] Jesus Christ hath so answered his righteousness,[4] that without the impairing of his right or sovereignty, without the least derogation from his per-

[1] 1 Cor. vi. 11; Eph. ii. 11, 12. [2] Eph. i. 5, 6, 11; 2 Tim. i. 9; Heb. vii. 22, x. 9, 10; 2 Cor. v. 21. [3] Gen. xviii. 25; Josh. xxiv. 19; Ps. v. 4–6; Hab. i. 13; Rom. i. 18, 32; 2 Thess. i. 6. [4] Vide Diat. de Just. Div.

fections, he may receive his sinning creatures again to favour. It being "the judgment of God that they which commit sin are worthy of death," Rom. i. 32, and "a righteous thing with him to render tribulation to sinners," 1 Thess. i. 6, for "shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?" Gen. xviii. 25; he hath set forth his Son to "declare his righteousness for the remission of sins," Rom. iii. 24, 25. Now, for whom Christ died, he died for all their sins: 1 John i. 7, "The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin," the application of it being commensurate to his intendment in his oblation, not extending itself to the actual effecting of any thing whatever which was not meritoriously procured thereby. "He loved the church, and gave himself for it; that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish," Eph. v. 25–27. He makes complete atonement to the justice of God on their behalf, so that the very vindictive justice of God hath nothing to lay to their charge. That which in God maintains the quarrel against sinners is atoned, and is no more their enemy than mercy itself; and this not upon condition of believing, to be antecedently accomplished before this be done. The satisfaction of justice vindictive depends not at all on any thing in us; it requires only that there be *vindicta noxæ*, and a vindication of the sovereignty of God over the sinning creature, by the infliction of that punishment which, in his infinite wisdom and righteousness, he hath proportioned unto sin. On a supposition of sin, in such creatures as being made meet and fit to yield voluntary obedience unto God, and so standing in a moral subjection to him, being their cutting off, what lies in them, their dependence on God (which that it should be continued is as necessary as that God be God, or the Lord of all), those creatures are, upon the account of the sovereignty and righteousness of God, whereof we speak, indispensably obnoxious unto punishment, which is of necessity required unto God's retaining his dominion over them. By the death of Christ, this condition is so far repaired that the dependence and subjection unto God of those for whom he died is made up so far as to a deliverance of them from a necessity of being obnoxious unto punishment, and that completely, without any abeyance upon conditions in themselves, which can have no influence thereinto. So that, though the process of the law sent forth be not instantly recalled, but man is suffered to lie under that arrest for a season, yet God lets fall his suit on this account, and will never pass his first sentence, from which we are reprieved, unto full and final execution, pronouncing himself well pleased with his Son,[1] resting satisfied with his mediatory performances, and seeking no farther.

[1] John iii. 36; Eph. ii. 3; 2 Cor. v. 18; Ps. xxi. 3, 4; Matt. xvii. 5.

(2.) The *law* of God is fulfilled. Unless this be answered in all the concernments of it, the Lord would be thought to change his will, to reverse his word, and to blur the copy of his own holiness. There is in the whole law and every parcel of it an eternal, indispensable righteousness and truth, arising either from the nature of the things themselves concerning which it is, or the relation of one thing unto another. That to fear God, to love him, to obey him, to do no wrong, are everlastingly, indispensably good and necessary, is from the nature of the things themselves, only with this supposition, that God would make creatures capable of yielding him such obedience. That that which is good shall be so rewarded, that which is evil so punished, is also an everlasting truth, upon supposition of such actual performances. Whereas, then, of this law there are two parts, the one absolute or preceptive in the rule and commands thereof, the other conditional, and rewarding in its promise or condemning in its curse, Christ by his death put himself, in their behalf for whom he died (to speak to that particular), under the curse of it: "He redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us," Gal. iii. 13.[1] Neither is this at all suspended on our believing. The law doth not threaten a curse only if we do not believe, but if we do not all things written therein, Deut. xxvii. 26. Whether we believe or not, the law takes no notice; as to the curse that it denounceth, if there hath been any sin, that must be executed. And the law is for the curse, as Isaac for the great spiritual blessing, Gen. xxvii. 27–29. He had but one; it hath but one great curse, and that being undergone by Christ, it hath not another for them in whose stead Christ underwent it. God having "made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin, we become the righteousness of God in him," 2 Cor. v. 21. All separation from God is by the curse of the law; all that is required in it, by it, is, that it be undergone. This is done by Christ for all believers; that thereby is taken away which alone can separate them from God or put any distance between them. But of this, and their subjection to the curse before their believing, more afterward.

(3.) The *truth* or veracity of God was particularly engaged to see sin punished, upon the account of the promulgation of the first express sanction of the law: "In the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die," Gen. ii. 17. For the satisfying the engagement of God's truth, there seemed to be a tender made in the sacrifices instituted of old; but it was rejected as insufficient to make good that word of God so eminently given out. There was neither any such relation, union, or conjunction, between the sinner and the innocent creature sacrificed, nor any such real worth in the sacrifice itself, as that the death of the substituted beast might by any means be so in-

[1] Rom. viii. 3, x. 3, 4; Gal. iv. 4, 5; Phil. iii. 9.

terpreted as to amount to the accomplishment of the truth of God, death being once denounced as the reward of sin: Heb. x. 5, 6, "Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not: in burnt-offerings and sacrifices for sin thou hadst no pleasure;" but saith our Saviour, "Lo, I come to do thy will, O God," verse 7. Will that do it? Yea, it will assuredly, for in the volume of his book it is written that he should so do. All that God willed to be done for the accomplishment of his truth was fulfilled by Christ when he came to give up himself, a sweet-smelling sacrifice, Eph. v. 2. God, then, may be true, his truth being salved to the utmost, though never any one of them for whom Christ died do die. But this, to the salvation of believers, is only as *removens prohibens.*

(4.) The *distributive justice* of God is upon this oblation of Christ engaged, upon the covenant and compact made with Christ as mediator to that purpose, to bestow on them for whom he offered and died all the good things which he promised him for them, in and upon the account of his undertaking in their behalf.[1] The distributive justice of God is that perfection of his nature whereby he rendereth to every one according to what either his vindictive justice on the one side, or his uprightness and faithfulness on the other, do require.[2] In rewarding, it respects his own faithfulness in all his engagements immediately; in punishing, the demerit of the creature; —there being no such natural connection and necessary coherence, from the nature of the things themselves, between obedience and reward as there is between sin and punishment.

Now, the Lord having given many eminent and glorious promises to his Son Jesus Christ (some whereof we shall mention afterward) concerning his seed and offspring, or those that he committed to his charge to be redeemed from their sins,[3] it is incumbent on him, in regard of his righteousness, to make out all those things in due time unto them; and therefore, that he might magnify that righteousness and truth of his, he hath cast the whole procedure of his grace into such a way, and all the acts of it into such a dependence upon one another, as that the one of them should have infallible influence into the other, and the effects of every one of them be rendered indubitably certain.

Thus upon the account of the death of Christ, antecedently to all considerations of faith or belief in them for whom he died, thus much is done for the extinguishing the quarrel about sin: The vindictive justice, law, and truth of God, are disengaged from pursuing the sentence of death and everlasting separation from God against them as

[1] Isa. liii. 10, 11.

[2] Gen. xviii. 25; Ps. v. 4–6, xxxi. 1, xxxv. 24, lxv. 5, lxxi. 2, xcvi. 13, xcviii. 2, ciii. 17, cxliii. 1, 11.

[3] Ps. ii. 7, 8, cx. 3, 7, xlv. 13, 14; Isa. xlix. 5, 6, 8, 9, lii. 13–15, liii. 11, lix. 20; John xii. 31, 32.

sinners, neither have they at all any thing to lay to their charge for which they should be cast out of the presence of God; yea, the Lord is moreover, in his own faithfulness and righteousness, with respect to the covenant of the Mediator, engaged to do that which is needful to the bringing of them to himself.[1] After some previous observations, I shall confirm what hath been spoken by sundry arguments. I say, then,—

(1.) That it is a most vain supposal which some make: "What if any one of them for whom Christ died should die in an unregenerate condition? would not the justice and condemning power of the law of God, notwithstanding the death of Christ, lay hold upon them?" It is, I say, a supposal of that which *in sensu composito* is impossible, and so in that sense (however upon other respects it may) not to be argued from. Christ died that those for whom he died might live, that they might be quickened and born again;[2] and so they shall, in their due season, every one undoubtedly be, and not any of them die in their sins.

(2.) That our affirmation is not in the least liable to that exception which usually men insist upon in opposition unto it,—namely, "That if Christ hath so satisfied justice, and fulfilled the law in reference to all them for whom he died, that the sentence of condemnation should not be issued out against them, but they must infallibly be saved, then there is no necessity either that they do at all believe, or, if they do, that they live in holiness and the avoidance of sin, all that being accomplished which by these mediums is sought for." I say, our position in itself is no way liable to this exception; for,—

[1.] Though the justice, law, and truth of God be satisfied and fulfilled as to their sins, so that he hath not on that account any thing to lay to their charge, yet this hinders not at all but that God may assign and ascribe *such a way for their coming to him as may be suited to the exalting of his glory*, the honour of Jesus Christ, who hath brought all this about, and the preparing of the soul of the sinner for the full enjoyment of himself: and this he hath done by the law of faith; which gives him the glory of his grace and all his other attributes; exalts Jesus Christ, whom it is his will we should honour as we honour himself;[3] and empties the poor sinful creature of itself, that it may be made meet for the inheritance of the saints in light.[4]

[2.] This consideration of the death of Christ, of his freeing us from condemnation for any or all of our sins, is not to be taken

[1] Isa. liii. 6; Gal. iv. 4, 5; Heb. x. 5–9; Rom. viii. 33, 34; Isa. liii. 11, 12; Rom. iv. 25; Phil. i. 29; Eph. i. 3–6. [2] John iii. 16, 17, vii. 38; 2 Cor. v. 14, 15. [3] Isa. liii. 5, 6, 11, 12; Dan. ix. 24; Rom. viii. 32, 33; Gal. iii. 13; Heb. ii. 14, 15; Rom. i. 16, 17, iii. 23–25, iv. 16, ix. 31, 32; John v. 23. [4] Rom. iii. 27; Eph. i. 6; Phil. iii. 8–11; Col. i. 12.

apart or separated from the other, of *his procuring the Holy Spirit* and grace for us, that we should not commit sin, being born of God, with all the dispensations of precepts and promises, exhortations and threatenings, whereby he morally carries on the work of his grace in the hearts of his saints. Setting us free from the guilt of sin, he so far also sets us free from the power of sin that we should be dead to it, live no longer in it, that it should not *reign in us*, nor prevail to turn us utterly from God.[1]

[3.] They seem not much to be acquainted with the *nature of faith, holiness, and communion with God*, who suppose the end of them is only for the escaping of the wrath that is to come. They are the things whereby we are daily renewed and changed into the *image of the glory of God*,[2] and so not only made useful and serviceable to him here, but also prepared for the fulness of his likeness, wherewith we shall be satisfied, hereafter. Wherefore, observe,—

[4.] That though this complete atonement be made in the death of Christ, yet it remains free in the bosom of God when he will begin our *actual deliverance* from under that arrest of death that was gone out against us,[3] and how far in this life he will carry it towards perfection.[4] It is, I say, in his bosom when he will bestow his Spirit on us for regeneration and faith, when he will actually absolve us from under the arrest of the law, by the application of his mercies in Christ unto us by the promise of the gospel, and how far he will carry on the work of our deliverance from sin in this life. Only that is done upon the account whereof it is impossible that the quarrel against sin should be carried on to the utmost execution of the sentence denounced towards those sinners for whom Christ died;[5] which I prove by these following arguments:—

1*st.* It is plainly affirmed that Christ, by his death, obtained "everlasting redemption," Heb. ix. 12. He obtained everlasting redemption before his ascending into the most holy place, called elsewhere the "purging of our sins," Heb. i. 3. Now this redemption, as was said, the apostle informs us consists in "the forgiveness of sins:" Eph. i. 7, "In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins," or the intercision of that obligation unto punishment which attends sin in reference to the sinner, and his subjection to the law of God and the righteousness thereof. As the oblation of Christ respecteth God and his justice, to whom it is given as a price and ransom, and whereof it is an atonement, it is, and is called (or we are said to receive thereby), "redemption;" as it respects them who receive the benefit of that redemption, it is "the forgiveness of sins."

[1] Eph. v. 25–27; Tit. ii. 14; Gal. iv. 4–6; John xvii. 17; Matt. xxviii. 18–20; Eph. iv. 11–14; Rom. vi. 2–6. etc. [2] Eph. iv. 22; 2 Cor. v. 15; Rom. xii. 1, 2; 2 Cor. iii. 18. [3] Matt. xx. 5, 6. [4] 2 Thess. i. 11; John iii. 8. [5] 2 Pet. i. 1.

Forgiveness of sins, as it is completed and terminated in the consciences of believers, requireth the interposition of faith,[1] for the receiving of Christ in the promise, "who of God is made unto us righteousness," 1 Cor. i. 30; but in respect of the procurement of it, and the removing all causes upon the account whereof sin should be imputed unto us, that is perfected in the oblation of Christ.[2] Hence he is said to "bear our sins in his own body on the tree," 1 Pet. ii. 24. And being once on him, either he was discharged of them, or he must for ever lie under the burden of them. They were on him on the tree; what, then, is become of them? If he were freed of them, and justified from them (as he was, Isa. l. 8, 9), how should they ever be laid to our charge? And yet this freedom from condemnation for sin for all the elect, which God himself so clearly asserts, Rom. viii. 32, 33, etc., doth not in the least set them free from the necessity of obedience, nor acquit them from contracting the guilt of sin upon the least irregularity or disobedience.

2*dly*. We are said to do together with Christ those things which he doth for us in his own person, and that upon the account of that benefit which by those his personal performances doth redound unto us, and which being done, the quarrel about sin, as to make an utter separation between God and our souls, is certainly removed. Thus we are said to die with him, to be raised again with him, and with him we enter into the holy place, this whole business about sin being passed through, for he that is dead is justified from sin.[3] Now, all this being done by us and for us, in and by our Head, can we henceforth die any more? shall death any more have dominion over us? This the apostle argues, 2 Cor. v. 14, 15: "We judge," saith he, "that if one died for all, then were all" (that is, all those for whom he died) "dead," or died likewise; they were dead in and with him, their sponsor, as to the curse due for sin, that henceforth they might "live to him which died for them."

3*dly*. The compact or agreement that was between the Father and the Son as mediator, about the business of our redemption in his blood, manifests this truth. The Father required at his hands that he should do his will, fulfil his pleasure and counsel, make his soul an offering for sin, and do that which the sacrifices of bulls and goats shadowed out, but could never effect; upon the performance whereof he was to "see his seed," and to "bring many sons to glory."[4] A covenanting and agreement into an uncertain issue and event (as that must be of God and the Mediator, if the salvation of the persons concerning which and whom it was be not infallibly certain) ought not, at any cheap rate or pretence, to be assigned to infinite wisdom. In the accomplishment of this undertaking, where-

[1] Rom. i. 5. [2] Rom. iv. 4. [3] Rom. vi. 5, 8; 2 Cor. v. 14, 15; Col. iii. 1; Rom. vi. 7. [4] Ps. xl. 8; Isa. liii. 10, 11; Heb. x. 1, 4, 7, ii. 10.

unto Christ was designed, the Father dealt with him in strict and rigid justice;[1] there was neither composition about the debt, nor commutation about the punishment that he had taken upon himself. Now, doth not exact justice require that the ransom being given in, the prisoners be delivered? that the debt being paid, the bond be cancelled as to any power of imprisoning the original debtor? that punishment being undergone and the law fulfilled, the offender go free? Especially, all this being covenanted for in the first undertaking, doubtless wrath shall not arise a second time. The right knowledge, use, and improvement, of this grace being given, bounded, and directed, by the gospel, it is safeguarded from abuse by that which God calls his own wisdom.

4*thly*. It appears from what God bestows upon his elect, upon the account of the undertaking of Christ for them, in the pursuit of the eternal purpose of his will, antecedently to any thing whatsoever in them that should engage him to do them the least good. When God comes as a friend, to hold out unto and bestow good things upon men,—I mean, good in that kind of mercy which is peculiarly suited to the bringing of them to the enjoyment of himself,—it is evident that he hath put an end to all enmity and quarrel between him and them. Now, antecedently unto any thing in men, God, for Christ's sake, bestows, with the greatest act of friendship imaginable, no less than the Holy Spirit on them. By him they are quickened; and their faith is but a fruit of that Spirit bestowed on them. If they have not any sufficiency in themselves, as much as to think a good thought, nor can do any thing that is acceptable to God, being by nature dead in trespasses and sins, which at present (the Scripture affirming it) I take for granted, then assuredly God doth give his Holy Spirit to the saints,[2] whereby he "works in them both to will and to do of his good pleasure,"[3] antecedently to any good thing in them that is well-pleasing unto him. Every thing that men do must either be brought forth by the strength and ability of their own natural faculties, assisted and provoked by motives and persuasions from without, or it must be the operation of the Spirit of God. There is not another principle to be fixed on. The first (at present I take it for granted) is not the fountain of any spiritual acting whatsoever, neither can any gracious act be educed radically from the corrupt natural faculty, however assisted or advantaged.[4] It must be the Spirit, then, that is the sole principal cause and author of all the movings of our souls towards God that are acceptable to him in Christ. Now, the cause is certainly before the effect; and the Spirit, in order of nature, is bestowed upon us antecedently to

[1] Rom. viii. 32; 1 Pet. ii. 24; 2 Cor. v. 21; Gal. iii. 13; Heb. ii. 9. [2] Isa. lix. 21; Rom. viii. 11; Gal. v. 22; 1 Cor. xii. 4; 2 Cor. iii. 5; John xv. 4, 5; Eph. ii. 1–3. [3] Phil. ii. 13. [4] Gen. viii. 21; Job xiv. 4; Matt xii. 33.

all the grace which he worketh in us. Whether the Spirit be bestowed on men on the account of Christ's undertaking for them none can question but they must withal deny him to be the mediator of the new covenant. The Spirit of grace is the principal promise thereof, Isa. lix. 20, 21. "We are blessed with all spiritual blessings in Christ," Eph. i. 3. Surely the Holy Spirit himself, so often promised to us of God, is a spiritual blessing. God's bestowing faith on us is antecedent to our believing, and this also is given upon the account of Christ: Phil. i. 29, "Unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ to believe on him." If, then, God, for Christ's sake, antecedently to any thing that is good, that is not enmity to him, that is not iniquity in men, do bestow on them all that ever is good in them, as to the root and principle of it, surely his quarrel against their sins is put to an issue. Hence Christ being said to "make reconciliation for the sins of the people," Heb. ii. 17, God, as one pacified and atoned thereupon, is said to be "in him reconciling the world unto himself," 2 Cor. v. 19; and in the dispensation of the gospel he is still set forth as one carrying on that peace whose foundation is laid in the blood of his Son,[1] by the atonement of his justice; and we are said to accept or "receive the atonement," Rom. v. 11. We receive it by faith, it being accepted by him. Thus this death and oblation is said to be a "sacrifice of a sweet-smelling savour," Eph. v. 2,—that wherein God is abundantly delighted, and wherewith his soul is fully satisfied; so that as when he smelled a sweet savour from the sacrifice of Noah, he sware he would curse the earth no more,[2] smelling this sweet savour of the oblation of Christ on the account of them for whom it was offered, he will not execute the curse on them whereof they were guilty. I might also insist on those testimonies, for the farther proof of the former assertion, where an immediate efficacy for the taking away of sin is ascribed to the death of Christ;[3] but what hath been spoken may at present suffice.

The premises considered, some light may be brought forth to discover the various mistakes of men about the effects of the death of Christ as to the taking away of sin, if that were now the matter before us.[4] Some having truly fixed their thoughts on the efficacy of the death of Christ for abolition of sin, do give their lusts and darkness leave to make wretched inferences thereupon; as that, "Because we are so completely justified and accepted before and without our believing, or the consideration of any thing whatever in us, therefore sin is nothing, nor at all to be accounted of." And though they say we must not sin that grace may abound, yet too many, by

[1] Eph. ii. 13–17. [2] Gen. viii. 21. [3] John xvii. 19; Rom. v. 19, vi. 6; 2 Cor. v. 21; Eph. v. 25, 26; Tit. ii. 14. [4] Heb. ix. 14, x. 14; 1 Pet. ii. 24; 1 John i. 7; Rev. i. 5, 6.

woful experience, have discovered what such corrupt conclusions have tended unto. Others, again, fixing themselves on the necessity of obedience, and the concurrence of actual faith to the completing of justification in the soul of the sinner, with a no less dangerous reflection upon the truth, do suspend the efficacy of the death of Christ upon our believing, "which gives life, and vigour, and virtue unto it," as they say, "and is the sole originally discriminating cause of all the benefits we receive thereby. Without the antecedent accomplishment of that condition in us, or our actual believing, it is not," say they, "nor will be, useful." Yea, that "the intention of God is to bestow upon us the fruits and effects of the death of Christ, upon condition we do believe; which that we shall is no part of his purchase, and which we can of ourselves perform," say some of them, others not. Doubtless, these things are not, being rightly stated, in the least inconsistent. Christ may have his due, and we [may be] bound to the performance of our duty; which might be cleared by an enlargement of the ensuing considerations:—

(1.) That all good things whatsoever that are spiritual, that are wrought either for men or in them, are fruits of the death of Christ. They have nothing of themselves but nakedness, blood, and sin, guilt and impenitency; so that it is of indispensable necessity that God should show them favour antecedently to any act of their believing on him. Faith is given for Christ's sake, as was observed.

(2.) That all the effects and fruits of the death of Christ, antecedent to our believing, are deposited in the hand of the righteousness and faithfulness of God, to whom as a ransom it was paid, as an atonement it was offered, before whom as a price and purchase it was laid down.[1] It is all left in the hands of God's faithfulness, righteousness, mercy, and grace, to be made out effectually to them for whom he died, in the appointed time or season. So that,—

(3.) The state or condition of those for whom Christ died is not actually and really changed by his death in itself, but they lie under the curse whilst they are in the state of nature, unregenerate, and all effects of sin whatever.[2] That which is procured for them is left in the hand of the Father; they are not in the least intrusted with it until the appointed time do come.

(4.) That faith and belief are necessary, not to add any thing to complete the procurement of forgiveness of sins, any or all, but only to the actual receiving of it, when, upon the account of the death of Christ, it pleaseth God, in the promise of the gospel, to hold it out and impart it unto the soul, thereby completing covenant-justification.

And thus the whole business of salvation may be resolved into

[1] 1 Tim. ii. 5, 6; Heb. ii. 17; 2 Cor. v. 18, 19; 1 Cor. vi. 19, 20.
[2] Eph. ii. 1–5; John iii. 36.

the mediation of Christ, and yet men carried on under an orderly dispensation of law and gospel into the enjoyment of it. Of the whole, these degrees are considerable:—

(1.) God's eternal purpose of saving some in and by the mediation of Christ, that mediation of Christ being interposed between the purpose of God and the accomplishment of the thing purposed, as the fruit and effect of the one, the meritorious procuring cause of the other. This act of the will of God the Scripture knows by no other name than that of "election," or "predestination," or "the purpose of God according to election," or "the purpose of his will in Jesus Christ;" which though it comprise his will of not punishing them in their own persons that are within the verge of this his purpose, yet it is not properly an act of forgiveness of sin, nor are they pardoned by it, nor is the law actually innovated or its obligation on them unto punishment dissolved, nor themselves justified in any sense thereby.[1]

(2.) That interposition of the Lord Christ whereof we have been treating being a *medium* indispensably necessary as to satisfaction, and freely designed by the will and wisdom of God for such a procurement of the good things designed in his eternal counsel as might advance the glory of his grace and make known his righteousness also; and this being fixed on by God as the only thing by him required that all the mercies, all the grace of his eternal purpose, might be dispensed in the order by him designed unto them; upon the performance of it God resteth as well pleased, and they for whom he hath mediated by his blood, or for whom he is considered so to have done, are reconciled unto God, as to that part of reconciliation which respects the love of God, as to the dispensing the fruits of it unto them even whilst they are enemies, upon the accounts before mentioned.[2]

(3.) Things being thus stated between God and them for whom Christ died, on the account of his death God actually absolves them from under that sentence and curse of the law, by sending the Spirit of his Son into their hearts, to quicken them and to implant faith in them.[3] And in what act of God to place his actual absolution of sinners, ungodly persons, whom Christ died for, but in this actual collation of the Spirit and habit of grace on them, I am not as yet satisfied. Neither doth this in any measure confound our justification and sanctification; for nothing hinders but that the same act, as it is of free grace in opposition to works or any thing in us, may justify us, or exert the fruit of his love, which was before purchased by Christ, in our gracious acceptation, notwithstanding all that was

[1] Acts xiii. 38, 39; Rom. v. 10; John iii. 16; Rom. v. 7–9; 1 John iv. 10; Heb. ii. 17, ix. 14; Eph. i. 4–9, etc.; Rom. ix. 11; John iii. 36; Eph. ii. 3; Rom. v. 6, 8; Gal. iii. 23; 2 Cor. v. 21; Rom. iii. 23–25; 1 Cor. i. 30. [2] Matt. xvii. 5; Rom. v. 9, 10; 2 Cor. v. 18, 19, 21; 1 Pet. ii. 24. [3] Gal. iv. 6; Rom. viii. 11.

against us, and also, by principling us with grace for obedience, sanctify us throughout.

(4.) This being done, they with whom God thus graciously deals "receive the atonement," and, "being justified by faith, have peace with God." But this is not the matter or subject of our present contest.

This, then, is the first influence which the blood-shedding in the death and oblation of Christ hath into the saints' continuance of the love and favour of God: It taketh away the guilt of sin, that it shall not be such a provocation to the eyes of his glory (his law being fulfilled and justice satisfied) as to cause him utterly to turn away his love from them; and they becoming "the righteousness of God in him,"[1] to all intents and purposes, what should separate them from the love of God? He hath made peace in the blood of the cross of his Son, and will not engage in enmity against his elect any more to eternity; but, in his own way and own time (as he hath the sovereignty of all in his hands), he will bring them infallibly to the enjoyment of himself.[2] And thus much, by this discourse about the effects of the death of Christ, have we clearly obtained: What Christ aims to accomplish by his death, and what was the design and intention of the Father that he should accomplish, that cannot fail of its issue and appointed event by any interposure whatever. That the effectual removal of every thing that might intercept, hinder, or turn aside, the love and favour of God from them for whom he died, is the designed effect of the death of Christ, hath been demonstrated. This, then, in the order wherein it hath seemed good to the infinite wisdom of God to proceed in dispensing his grace unto sinners, shall certainly be fulfilled, and all believers saved to the utmost.

2. I come, in the second place, to demonstrate that our Saviour secures the stability of the love of the saints to God and their abiding with him, by taking away and removing whatever might hinder them herein, or prevail upon them utterly and wickedly to depart from him. That which meritoriously might cause God to turn from us he utterly destroys and abolishes; and that which efficiently might cause us to turn from God, that also he destroys and removes. Now, all that is of this kind, that works effectually and powerfully for the alienating of the hearts of believers from God, or keeping men in a state of alienation from him, may be referred unto two principles: (1.) Satan himself;[3] (2.) His works. The world, as under the curse, is an instrument in his hand, who is called the god thereof, to allure, vex, and mischief us withal; neither hath it the least power or efficacy in itself, but only as it is managed in the hand of Satan to turn men from God.[4] And yet the Lord Christ hath not

[1] 2 Cor. v. 21. [2] Eph. ii. 13–17; Rom. viii. 32, 33. [3] Gen. iii. 14. [4] 2 Cor. iv. 4; Matt. iv. 9.

let that go free neither without its death's wound, but bids his followers "be of good cheer, for he had overcome the world,"—that is, for them, and in their stead,—so that it should never be used nor heightened in its enmity to a conquest over them;[1] I mean a total and final conquest, such as might frustrate any intention of God in his undertaking for them. It is not our loss of a little blood, but our loss of life, that makes the enemy a conqueror. But now for Satan:—

(1.) He overcomes, destroys, and breaks *him* in pieces, with his power: Heb. ii. 14, "Through death he destroyed him that had the power of death, that is, the devil." The first thing that was promised of him was, that he should "break the head of the serpent," Gen. iii. 15 He doth it also in and for "the seed of the woman,"—all the elect of God, opposed to the seed of the serpent or generation of vipers. In pursuit hereof he "spoils principalities and powers, and makes a show of them openly, triumphing over them in his cross," Col. ii. 15. In the blood of his cross he conquered, and brake the power of the devil, "binding that strong man armed, and spoiling his goods," making a show of him and them, as great conquerors were wont to do with their captives and their spoils.

Now, there are two ways whereby the blood of Christ thus brake the power of Satan, that he shall not lead those always captive at his pleasure, nor rule in them, as children of disobedience, in the behalf of whom his power was so broken:—

[1.] He subdues him by taking away all that *right* and *title* which he had by sin to rule over them: I speak of the elect of God. By the entrance of sin, the devil entered upon a twofold rule in reference to sinners:—1*st.* A rule *over* them with the terror and dread of death and hell. They are in bondage by reason of death all their days, Heb. ii. 14, 15; and the devil hath the power of that death upon the world whereunto they are in bondage. The death that is in the curse is put into his hand to manage it, to the dread and terror of sinners; and by it he hath always kept many, and to this day doth keep innumerable souls in unexpressible bondage, putting them upon barbarous inhumanities to make atonement for their sins, and forcing some to inflict revenge and destruction upon themselves, thinking to prevent, but really hastening, that which they fear. As of old this power of his lay at the bottom of all the abominations wherewith men provoked God when they thought to atone him,[2] as by burning their children in the fire, and the like, Mic. vi. 6, 7,[3] so at present is it the principle of all that superstitious will-worship and religious drudgery which is spread over the antichristian world.

[1] John xvi. 33; Gal. i. 4; 1 John v. 4, 5. [2] Diat. de Just. Divin. [3] Lev xviii. 21; Deut. xviii. 10; 2 Kings xxi. 6, xxiii. 10; 2 Chron. xxxiii. 6; Jer. xxxii. 35.

Yea, the inventions of men ignorant of the righteousness of God, and convinced of their own insufficiency to perform, work out, and establish, a righteousness of their own, that shall perfectly answer the exact, holy demands of the law, as far as to them is discovered, to deliver themselves from under this dread of death, wherewith he that hath the power of it terrifies them all their days, are indeed the foundation and spring, the sum and substance, of all religions in the world, and the darling of all religious persons, in and with whom Christ is not all and in all. And herein have the Papists gone one notable step beyond all their predecessors in superstition and devotion; for whereas they universally contented themselves with sacrifices, purifications, purgations, lustrations, satisfactions, recompenses, to be in this life performed, these latter,—more refined, sublimated, mercurial wits,—observing that nothing they could here invent would settle and charm the spirits of men haunted with the dread of death we speak of, but that instantly they came again, with the same disquietness as formerly, and renewed mention of sin, upon the insufficiency of the atonement fixed on for its expiation, they found out that noble expedient of the future purgatory, which might maintain the souls of men in some hopes in this life, and secure themselves from the cries and complaints of men against the insufficiency of their remedy which they do prescribe. 2*dly*. As he rules *over* men by death, and hell that follows after, so also he rules *in* men by sin: he "ruleth in the children of disobedience," Eph. ii. 2. And to this end, to secure men to himself,—he being that strong man armed who hath the first possession, and labours to keep what he hath got in peace,[1]—he sets up strongholds, imaginations, and high things, against God, 2 Cor. iv. 4. Now, this twofold power of Satan, *over men* and *in men*, doth both arise from sin, whereby men are first cast out of God's love and care, becoming obnoxious to death, and, secondly, are alienated from God in willing subjection to his enemy. And both these parts and branches of his dominion are, in reference unto the elect, cast down and destroyed, and taken away; for, first, Christ by his death cashiers the *title* and *claim* that Satan laid to the exercise of any such power, in reference unto the elect. When men cast down any from rule, they may interrupt and put by their exercise of any power, but they cannot take away their title unless it be of their own giving. Christ by his death takes away the very bottom, foundation, and occasion, of the whole power of Satan. All the power of Satan in the first sense consists in death, and those things that either conduce to it or do attend it. Now, death entered by sin, and therewithal the power of Satan.[2] The Lord Jesus taking away sin and putting an end there-

[1] Matt. xii. 29; Mark iii. 27; Luke xi. 21.
[2] Gen. iii. 3; Deut. xxvii. 26; Rom. v. 12.

unto, as was manifested, the whole title of Satan falls and comes to nothing, Heb. ii. 9–15. And this was really done in the cross, its manifestation by the gospel ensuing thereupon, according to the appointment of God, Col. ii. 15; Tit. i. 3.

[2.] He takes away the *exercise of his power*, and that to the utmost: for *he binds him with bonds*,—he binds the strong man armed, Matt. xii. 29; and he breaks his head, Gen. iii. 15; then leads him captive, Ps. lxviii. 18; triumphs over him, Col. ii. 15; treads him down under the feet of his, Rom. xvi. 20, as the kings of Canaan were trod down under the feet of the children of Israel; then destroys him, Heb. ii. 14. What exercise of power is left to a conquered, bound, wounded, captived, triumphed-over, trodden-down, destroyed caitiff? Think ye this wretch shall ever wholly prevail against any one of them for whose sake all this was done to him? Neither can this with any colour of reason be said to be done for them, or with respect unto them, towards whom the power of Satan remains entire all their days, whom he leads captive and rules over at his pleasure, until death takes full dominion over them.

(2.) As he destroys Satan, so he doth his *works:* "For this cause was he manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil," 1 John iii. 8. He doth not only bind the strong man armed, but also he spoils his goods, Matt. xii. 29. Whatsoever is in men that follows from that corrupted principle of nature is reckoned to the work of Satan, being the issue of his seduction. Whatsoever his temptations draw men out unto, the Lord Christ came to destroy it all, to make an end of it; and he will not fail of his end, but certainly carry on his undertaking, until he hath utterly destroyed all those works of Satan in the hearts of all that are his. He "redeems us from our vain conversation," 2 Pet. i. 18, 19,—from the power of our lusts and corruptions, leading us out to a vain conversation. The apostle tells us, Rom. vi. 6, that by his death the "old man is crucified," and the "body of sin destroyed." The craft of sin, the old man, and the strength of sin, the body of it,—or the ruling of original sin, the old man, and the full fruit of actual sin in the body of it,—are by the death of Christ crucified and destroyed. And in that whole chapter, from our participation in the death of Christ, he argues to such an abolition of the law and rule of sin, to such a breaking of the power and strength of it, that it is impossible that it should any more rule in us or have dominion over us. Of the way whereby virtue flows out from the death of Christ for the killing of sin I am not now to speak.

And this is the first way whereby the death of Christ hath an influence into the safeguarding of believers in their continuance in the love and favour of God: He so takes away the guilt of sin that it shall never be able utterly to turn the love of God from them; and so takes away the rule of Satan and power of sin, destroying the one

and killing the other, that they shall never be able to turn them wholly from God.

II. Farther to secure their continuance with God, he procureth the Holy Spirit for them, as was showed before. But because much weight lies upon this part of our foundation, I shall a little farther clear it up. That the Spirit of grace and adoption, with all those spiritual mercies and operations wherewith he is attended and accompanied, is a promise of the new covenant, doubtless is by its own evidence put out of question. There is scarce any promise thereof wherein he is not either clearly expressed or evidently included; yea, and oftentimes the whole covenant is stated in that one promise of the Spirit, the actual collation and bestowing of all the mercy thereof being his proper work and peculiar dispensation for the carrying on the great design of the salvation of sinners. So Isa. lix. 21, "As for me," saith God, "this is my covenant with them; My Spirit that is upon thee, and my words which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth," etc.;—"This is my covenant," saith God, "or what in my covenant I do faithfully engage to bestow upon you." But of this text and its vindication more afterward. Many other places, not only pregnant of proof to the same purpose, but expressly in terms affirming it, might be insisted on.

Now, that this Spirit, promised in the covenant of grace, as to the bestowing of him on the elect of God, or those for whom Christ died, is of his purchasing and procurement in his death, is apparent:—

1. Because he is the mediator of the covenant, by whose hands and for whose sake all the mercies of it are made out to them who are admitted into the bond thereof. Though men are not completely *stated* in the covenant before their own believing, which brings in what on their part is stipulated, yet the covenant and grace of it lays hold of them before, even to bestow faith on them, or they would never believe; for faith is not of ourselves, it is the gift of God.[1] God certainly bestows no such gifts but from a covenant. Spiritual graces are not administered solely in a providential dispensation. Faith for the receiving the pardon of sin is no gift nor product of the covenant of works. Now, as in general the mercies of the covenant are procured by the mediator of it, so this whereof we speak in an especial manner: Heb. ix. 15, "For this cause he is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance." By his death, they for whom he died, and who thereupon are called, being delivered from their sins, which were against the covenant of works,[2] receive the promise or pledge of an eternal inheritance. What this great promise

[1] Gen. xvii. 7; Jer. xxxi. 31–34, xxxii. 38–40; Ezek. xi. 19, 20, xxxvi. 25, 26; Heb. viii. 8–12; Eph. ii. 8. [2] Deut. xxvii. 26; Gal. iii. 10; Rom. iii. 20.

here intended is, and wherein it doth consist, the Holy Ghost declares, Acts ii. 33. The promise which Jesus Christ received of the Father, upon his exaltation, was that of the Holy Ghost, having purchased and procured the bestowing of him by his death. Upon his exaltation, the dispensation thereof is committed to him, as being part of the compact and covenant which was between his Father and himself, the grand bottom of his satisfaction and merit. This is the great, original, radical promise of that eternal inheritance. By the promised Spirit are we begotten anew unto a hope thereof, made meet for it, and sealed up unto it:[1] yea, do but look upon the Spirit as promised, and ye may conclude him purchased; "for all the promises of God are yea and amen in Jesus Christ," 2 Cor. i. 20. They all have their confirmation, establishment, and accomplishment in, by, and for Jesus Christ. And if it be granted that any designed, appointed mercy whatever, that, in Christ, the Lord blesseth us withal, be procured for us by him in the way of merit (being given freely to us through him, but reckoned to him of debt), it will easily be manifested that the same is the condition of every mercy whatever promised unto us, and given us upon his mediatory interposition.

2. It appears from that peculiar promise that Christ makes of sending his Holy Spirit unto his own. He tells them, indeed, once and again, that the Father will send him, as he comes from that original and fountain love from which also himself was sent;[2] but withal he assures us that he himself will send him: John xv. 26, "When the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth." It is true that he is promised here only as a comforter, for the performance of that part of his office; but look, upon what account he is sent for any one act or work of grace, on that he is sent for all. John xvi. 7, "I will send him then," saith Christ; and that as a fruit of his death, as the procurement of his mediation, for that alone he promiseth to bestow [Him] on his. And, in particular, he tells us that he receives the Spirit from the Father for us, upon his intercession; wherein, as hath been elsewhere demonstrated,[3] he asks no more nor less than what by his death is obtained: John xiv. 16, 17, "I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive." He tells us, verse 13, that whatsoever we ask he will do it; but withal in these verses how he will do it, even by interceding with the Father for it as a fruit of his blood-shedding, and the promise made to him upon his undertaking to glorify his Father's name in the great work of redemption, John xvii. 4–6. And therefore he informs us, that when the Comforter, whom he procureth for us, shall come, "he shall glorify

[1] Rom. viii. 11; Col. i. 12; Eph. iv. 30. [2] John xiv. 16, 26. [3] Salus Electorum, Sanguis Jesu, vol. x.

him," and "shall receive of his, and show it unto us," John xvi. 14,—farther manifest his glory, in his bringing nothing with him but what is his, or of his procurement: so also instructing us clearly and plentifully to ask in his name, that is, for his sake,—which to do plainly and openly is the great privilege of the new testament;—for so he tells his disciples, chap. xvi. 24, "Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name," who yet were believers, and had made many addresses unto God in and through him, but darkly, as they did under the old testament, when they begged mercy "for his sake," Dan. ix. 17; but to plead with the Father clearly upon the account of the mediation and purchase of Christ, that, I say, is the privilege of the new testament. Now, in this way he would have us ask the Holy Spirit at the hand of God, Luke xi. 9–13. Ask him; that is, as to a clearer, fuller administration of him unto us, for he is antecedently bestowed, as to the working of faith and regeneration, even unto this application: for without him we cannot once ask in the name of Christ, for none can call Jesus Lord, or do any thing in his name, but by the Spirit of God. This I say, then: He in whom we are "blessed with all spiritual blessings" hath procured the Holy Spirit for us, and through his intercession he is bestowed on us, Eph. i. 3. Now, "where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty" from sin, peace and acceptance with God, 2 Cor. iii. 17. But it may be objected, "Although this Spirit be thus bestowed on believers, yet may they not cast him off, so that his abode with them may be but for a season, and their glory not be safeguarded in the issue, but their condemnation increased by their receiving of him, Rom. viii. 14, 15?" This being the only thing wherein this proof of believers' abiding with God seems liable to exception, I shall give a triple testimony of the certainty of the continuance of the Holy Spirit with them on whom he is bestowed, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses this truth may be established; and they are no mean ones neither, but the three that bear witness in heaven, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.

The FIRST you have Isa. lix. 21, "As for me, this is my covenant with them, saith the LORD; My Spirit which is upon thee, and my words which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed's seed, saith the LORD, from henceforth and for ever." That which the Lord declares here to the church he calls "his covenant." Now, whereas in a covenant there are two things,—1. What is stipulated on the part of him that makes the covenant; 2. What of them is required with whom it is made (which in themselves are distinct, though in the covenant of grace God hath promised that he will work in us what he requires of us),—that here mentioned is clearly an evidence of somewhat of the first kind,—of that goodness that God in the covenant doth promise to

bestow. Though perhaps words of the future tense may sometimes have an imperative construction, where the import of the residue of the words enforces such a sense, yet because it may be so in some place therefore it is so in this place, and that therefore these words are not a promise that the Spirit shall not depart, but an injunction to take care that it do not depart, as Mr Goodwin will have it, is a weak inference; and the close of the words will by no means be wrested to speak significantly to any such purpose, "Saith the LORD, from henceforth and for ever," which plainly make the words promissory, and an engagement of God himself to them to whom they are spoken. So that the interpretation of these words, "This is my covenant with them," by Mr Goodwin, chap. xi. sect. 4, p. 227, —"That covenant of perpetual grace and mercy which I made with them requireth this of them, in order to the performance of it on my part, that they quench not my Spirit which I have put into them,"—doth plainly invert the intendment of God in them, and substitute what is tacitly required as our duty into the room of what is expressly promised as his grace. Observe then,—

2. That as no promise of God given to believers is either apt of itself to ingenerate, or by them to be received under, such an absurd notion of being made good whatsoever their deportment be, it being the nature of all the promises of God to frame and mould them to whom they are given into all holiness and purity, 2 Cor. vii. 1,—and this in especial is a promise of the principal author and cause of all holiness, to be continued to them, and is impossible to be apprehended under any such foolish supposal,—so also that this promise is absolute, and not conditional, can neither be colourably gainsaid nor the contrary probably affirmed. So that the strength of Mr Goodwin's two next exceptions,—1. "That this cannot be a promise of perseverance unto true believers, whatsoever their deportment shall be;" and, 2. "That it must be conditional, which cannot," as he saith, "be reasonably gainsaid,"—the first of them not looking towards our persuasion in this thing, and the latter being not in the least put upon the proof, is but very weakness; for what condition of this promise, I pray, can be imagined? God promises his Spirit of holiness, that sanctifieth us and worketh all holiness in us; and therewith the holy word of the gospel, which is also sanctifying, John xvii. 17; and that they shall abide with us for ever. It is the continuance of the presence of God with us for our holiness that is here promised. On what condition shall this be supposed to depend? Is it in case we continue holy? Who seeth not the vanity of interserting any condition? "I will be with you by my Spirit and word for ever, to keep you holy, provided you continue holy!"

3. It is a hard task, to seek to squeeze a condition out of those gracious words in the beginning of the verse, "As for me," which

Junius renders *de me autem,*—words wherein God graciously reveals himself as the sole author of this great blessing promised, it being a work of his own, which he accomplisheth upon the account of his free grace; and therefore God signally placed that expression in the entrance of the promise, that we may know whom to look unto for the fulfilling thereof. And it is yet a farther corruption to say, "That 'As for me,' is as much as, 'For my part, I will deal bountifully with them, provided they do so and so, what I require from them,'" which is Mr Goodwin's interpretation of the words; for of this supposition there is not one word in the text as incumbent on them to whom this promise is made in contradistinction to what God here promiseth; yea, he promiseth them, at least in the root and principle, whatsoever is required of them. Let it be that "As for me," is, "As for my part, I will do what here is promised," and there is an end of this debate.

4. The persons to whom this promise is made are called "thee" and "thy seed,"—that is, all those and only those with whom God is a God in covenant. God here minds them of the first making of this covenant with Abraham and his seed, Gen. xvii. 7. Now, who are this seed of Abraham? Not all his carnal posterity, not the whole nation of the Jews; which is the last subterfuge invented by our author to evade the force of our argument from this place. Our Saviour not only denies, but also proves by many arguments, that the Pharisees and their followers, who doubtless were of the nation of the Jews and *the carnal seed of Abraham*, were not the children of Abraham in this sense, nor his seed, but rather the devil's, John viii. 39–44. And the apostle disputes and argues the same case, Rom. iv. 9–12, and proves undeniably that it is believers only, whether circumcised or uncircumcised, whether Jews or Gentiles, that are this seed of Abraham and heirs of the promise. So, plainly, Gal. iii. 7, "Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham;" and then he concludes again, as the issue of his debate, verse 9, "So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham." And this is the sum of what Mr Goodwin objects unto this testimony, in our case, to the perpetual abiding of the Spirit with the saints.

The force, then, of this promise, and the influence it hath into the establishment of the truth we have in hand, will not be evaded and turned aside by affirming "that it is made to the whole people of Israel:" for besides that the Spirit of the Lord could not be said to be in the ungodly, rejected part of them, nor his word in their mouth, there is not the least, in text or context, to intimate such an extent of this promise as to the object of it: and it is very weakly attempted to be proved from Paul's accommodation and interpretation of the verse foregoing, "And the Redeemer shall come to Zion,"

etc., in Rom. xi. 26; for it is most evident and indisputable, to any one who shall but once cast an eye upon that place, that the apostle accommodates and applies these words to none but only those who shall be saved, being turned away from ungodliness to Christ; which are only the seed before described. And those he calls "All Israel," either in the spiritual sense of the word, as taken for the chosen Israel of God, or else indefinitely for that nation, upon the account of those plentiful fruits which the gospel shall find amongst them, when they shall "fear the LORD and his goodness in the latter days," Hos. iii. 5.

5. This, then, is a promise equally made unto all *believers:* it is to all that are in covenant; neither is there any thing that is of peculiar importance to any sort of believers, of any time, or age, or dispensation, therein comprised. It equally respecteth all to whom the Lord extends his covenant of grace. Certainly the giving of the Spirit of grace is not inwrapped in any promise that may be "of private interpretation," the concernment of all the saints of God lying therein. It cannot but be judged a needless labour to give particular instances in a thing so generally known in the word. Though the expressions differ, the matter of this promise is the same with that given to Abraham, Gen. xvii. 7, the Holy Spirit being the great blessing of the covenant, and bestowed on all and every one, and only on them, whom God hath graciously taken into covenant from the foundation of the world.

Mr Goodwin then labours in the fire in what he farther objects, sect. 6, "That this promise exhibiteth and holds forth some new grace or favour, which God hath not vouchsafed formerly either unto the persons to whom the said promise is now made, or to any others; but for the grace or favour of final perseverance, it is nothing (at least in the opinion of our adversaries) but what is common to all true believers, and what God hath conferred upon one and other of this generation from the beginning of the world."

Ans. The emphasis here put upon it doth not denote it to be a new promise, but a great one; not that it was never given before, but that it is now solemnly renewed, for the consolation and establishment of the church. If wherever we find a solemn promise made, and confirmed, and ratified, to the church, we must thence conclude that no saints were before made partakers of the mercy of that promise, we must also, in particular, conclude that no one ever had his sins pardoned before the giving of that solemn promise, Jer. xxxi. 34.

6. We say that the grace of perseverance is such as believers may expect, not upon the account of any thing in themselves, nor of the dignity of the state whereunto by grace they are exalted, but merely on this bottom and foundation, that it is freely promised of God, who hath also discovered that rise and fountain of his gracious

promise to lie in his *eternal love* towards them; so that they can lay no more claim unto it than to any other grace whatsoever. When we have the assurance given by any promise of God, to say that what is promised of him may be *expected of course*, is an expression that fell from Mr Goodwin when, in the heat of disputation, his thoughts were turned aside from the consideration of what it is to mix the promises of God with faith.

7. Whereas this is given in for the sense of the words, "That God will advance the dispensation of his grace and goodness towards or among his people to such an excellency and height that, if they prove not extremely unworthy, they shall have of the Spirit and word of God abundantly amongst them, and consequently abundance of peace and happiness for ever," it is most apparent that not any thing of the mind of God in the words is reached in this gloss; for,—

(1.) That condition, "If they prove not extremely unworthy," is extremely unworthily inserted, the promise being an engagement of God to keep and preserve them to whom it is made, by his Spirit, from being so. The Spirit is given and continued to them for that very purpose.

(2.) It is supposed to be given to all the nation of the Jews, when it is expressly made to the church and seed in covenant.

(3.) It carries the mercy promised no higher than outward dispensations, when the words expressly mention the *Spirit already received.*

Evident it is that the whole grace, love, kindness, and mercy, of this eminent promise, and consequently the whole covenant of grace, is enervated by this corrupting gloss. Do men think, indeed, that all the mercy of the covenant of grace consists in such tenders and offers as here are intimated? that it all lies in outward endearments, and such dealings with men as may seem to be suited to win upon them? and that, as to the real exhibition of it, it is wholly suspended upon the unstable, uncertain, frail wills of men? The Scripture seems to hold out something farther of more efficacy.[1] The design of these exceptions is indeed to exclude all the effectual grace of God, promised in Jesus Christ, upon the account that the things which he promiseth to work in us thereby are the duties which he requireth of us.

In sum, these are the exceptions which are given in to this testimony of God concerning the abiding of the Spirit with them on whom he is bestowed and for whom he is procured, to whom he is sent by Jesus Christ. And this is the interpretation of the words, "'As for me,' for my part, or as much as in me lieth, 'this is my covenant,' I will deal bountifully and graciously 'with them,' the whole nation of the Jews. 'My Spirit that is in thee,' that they ought to take

[1] Jer. xxxi. 31–34, xxxii. 38–40; Ezek. xi. 19, 20.

care that they entertain and retain, and not walk so extremely unworthily that he should depart from them." The residue of the words, wherein the main emphasis of them doth lie, is left untouched.

The import, then, of this promise is the same with that of the promises insisted on before, with especial reference to the Holy Spirit, procured for us and given unto us by Christ. The stability and establishing grace of the covenant is here called the "covenant," as sundry other particular mercies of it are also. Of the covenant of grace in Christ, the blessed Spirit to dwell in us and rest upon us is the main and principal promise. This, for our consolation, is renewed again and again in the Old and New Testament. As a *Spirit of sanctification*, he is given to men to make them believe; and *as a Spirit of adoption*, upon their believing. In either sense, God, even the Father, who takes us into covenant in Jesus Christ, affirms here that he shall never depart from us; which is our first testimony in the case in hand. With whom the Spirit abides, and whilst he abides with them, they cannot utterly forsake God nor be forsaken of him; for they who have the Spirit of God are the children of God, sons and heirs: but God hath promised that his Spirit shall abide with believers for ever, as hath been clearly evinced from the text under consideration, with a removal of all exceptions put in thereto.

The SECOND witness we have of the constant abode and residence of this Spirit, bestowed on them which believe, is that of the Son, who assures his disciples of it: John xiv. 16, "I will," saith he, "pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever." As our Saviour gives a rule of interpretation expressly of his prayers for believers, that he did in them intend not only the men of that present generation, but all that should believe to the end of the world, (John xvii. 20, "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word"): so is it a rule equally infallible for the interpretation of the gracious promises which he made to his disciples, that are not peculiarly appropriated to their season and work (in which yet, as to the general love, faithfulness, and kindness, manifested and revealed in them, the concernments of the saints in all succeeding ages do lie); they are proper to all believers as such. For whom he did equally intercede, to them he makes promises alike. They belong no less to us, on whom, in an especial manner, the ends of the world are fallen, than to those who first followed him in the regeneration. Let us, then, attend to the testimony in this place (and as he shall be pleased to increase our faith, mix it therewithal), that the Spirit he procureth for us and sends to us shall abide with us for ever; and whilst the Spirit of the Lord is with us we are his. Doubtless, it is no easy task to raise up any pretended plea against the evidence given in by

this witness, the Amen, the great and faithful Witness in heaven. He tells us that he will send the Spirit, to abide with us for ever; and therein speaks to the whole of the case in hand and question under debate. All we say is, that the Spirit of God shall abide with believers for ever. Christ says so too; and in the issue, whatever becomes of us, he will appear to be one against whom there is no rising up.

Against this testimony it is objected by Mr Goodwin, chap. xi. sect. 14, p. 234: "This promise," saith he, "concerning the abiding of this other Comforter for ever must be conceived to be made either to the apostles personally considered, or else to the whole body of the church, of which they were principal members. If the first of these be admitted, then it will not follow that because the apostles had the perpetual residence of the Spirit with them and in them, therefore every particular believer hath the like; no more than it will follow that because the apostles were infallible in their judgments, through the teachings of the Spirit in them, therefore every believer is infallible upon the same account also. If the latter be admitted, neither will it follow that every believer, or every member of the church, must needs have the residence of the Spirit with them for ever. There are principal privileges appropriated to corporations, which every particular member of them cannot claim. The church may have the residence of the Spirit of God with her for ever, and yet every present member thereof lose his interest and part in him; yea, the abiding of the Spirit in the apostles themselves was not absolutely promised, John xv. 10."

Ans. 1. The design of this discourse is to prove that this promise is not made to believers in general, or those who through the word are brought to believe in Christ in all generations to the end of the world, and consequently that they have no promise of the Spirit's abiding with them; for that is the thing opposed. And this is part of the doctrine that tends to their consolation and improvement in holiness! What thanks they will give to the authors of such an eminent discovery, when it shall be determined that they have deserved well of them and the truth of God, I know not; especially when it shall be considered that not only this, but all other promises uttered by Christ to his apostles,—as we had thought, not for their own behoof alone, but also for the use of the church in all ages,—are tied up in their tendency and use to the men of that generation, and to the employment to which they to whom he spoke were designed. But let us see whether these things are so or no. I say,—

2. There is not any necessary cause of that disjunctive proposition,—The promise of the perpetual residence of the Spirit is made "either to the apostles personally, or to the whole body of the church." By the rule formerly given for the interpretation of these

promises of Christ, it appears that what in this kind was made to the one was also given to the other; and how Mr Goodwin will enforce any necessary conclusion from this distinction, framed by himself for his own purpose, I know not. The promise was made both to these and those, the apostles and all other believers, because to the apostles as believers.

3. The making of the promise to the apostles *personally* doth not argue that it was made to them as apostles, but only that it was made to their persons or to them, though under another qualification, namely, of believing. It is given to them *personally as believers*, and so to all believers whatever. This also sets at liberty and plainly cashiers the comparison instituted between the apostles' infallibility as apostles and their sanctifying grace as believers, by the Spirit of grace given for that end. The apostles' infallibility, we confess, was from the Spirit; for they, as other holy men of old, wrote as they were moved by the Spirit of God, 2 Pet. i. 21: but that this was a distinct gift bestowed on them as apostles, and not the teaching of the Spirit of grace, which is given to all believers, 1 John ii. 27, we need not contend to prove.

Besides, to what end doth he contend that it was made to the apostles in the sense urged and by us insisted on, seeing he denies it in the close of this section, and chooseth rather to venture upon an opposition unto that commonly received persuasion that the apostles of Christ (the son of perdition only excepted) had an absolute promise of perseverance, than to acknowledge that which would prove so prejudicial and ruinous to his cause, as he knows the confession of such a promise made to them would inevitably be? He contends not, I say, about the *sense* of the promise, but would fain divert it from *other* believers (at the entrance of the section) by limiting it to the apostles; but considering afterward better of the matter, and remembering that the concession of an *absolute promise* of perseverance to any one saint whatever would evidently root up and cast to the ground the goodliest engine that he hath set up against the truth he opposeth, he suits it (in the close of the section) to an evasion holding better correspondency with its associates in this undertaking.

4. I wonder what chimerical church he hath found out, to which promises are made and privileges granted otherwise than upon the account of the persons whereof it is constituted. Suppose, I pray, that promises of the residence of the Spirit for ever with it be made to the church, which is made up of so many members, and that all these members, every one, should lose their interest in it, what subject of that promise would remain? What universal is this, that hath a real existence of itself and by itself, in abstraction from its particulars, in which alone it hath its being? or what whole is that

which is preserved in the destruction and dissolution of all its essentially constituent parts? The promises, then, that are made to the church are of two sorts:—(1.) Of such grace and mercies as, whether *inherent* or *relative*, have their *residence in* and *respect unto* particular persons as such. Of this sort are all the promises of grace, of sanctification, as also of justification, etc.; which are all things of men's personal spiritual interest. The promises made to the church of this nature are made unto it merely as consisting of so many, and those elected, redeemed persons, whose right and interest as those individual persons they are. (2.) Of all such good things as are the exurgency of the collected state of the saints, in reference to their spiritual, invisible communion, or visible gathering into a church constituted according to the mind of Christ and his appointment in the gospel. And these also are all of them founded on the former, and depend wholly upon them, and are resolved into them. All promises whatever, then, made to the church, the body of Christ, do not respect it primarily *as a corporation*, which is the second notion of it, but as consisting of those particular believers; much less as a chimerical universal, having a subsistence in and by itself, abstracted from its particulars. This evasion, then, notwithstanding, this promise of our Saviour doth still continue to press its testimony concerning the perpetual residence of the Holy Spirit with believers.

The scope of the place enforces that acceptation of these words which we insist upon. Our blessed Saviour, observing the trouble and disconsolation of his followers upon the apprehension of his departure from them, stirs them up to a better hope and confidence by many gracious promises and engagements of what would and should be the issue of his being taken away, John xiv. 1. He bids them free their hearts from trouble, and in the next words tells them that the way whereby it was to be done was by acting faith on the promises of his Father, and on those which in his Father's name he had made and was to make unto them. Of these he mentions many in the following verses, whereof the fountain head and spring is that of giving them the Comforter, not to abide with them for a season, as he had done with his bodily presence, but to continue with them as a comforter (and consequently to the discharging of his whole dispensation towards believers) *for ever*. He speaks to them as believers, as disconsolate, dejected believers, quickening their faith by exhortations; and gives them this promise as a solid foundation of peace and composedness of spirit, which he exhorted them unto. And if our Saviour intendeth any thing but what the words import,—namely, that he will give his Holy Spirit as a comforter, to abide with them for ever,—the promise hath not the least suitableness to relieve them in their distress, nor to accomplish the end for

which it was given them. But against this it is excepted, chap. xi. sect. 13, p. 233:—

1. "Evident it is that our Saviour doth not in this place oppose the abiding or remaining of the Holy Ghost to his own departure from the hearts or souls of men into which he is framed or come, but to his departure out of the world by death, which was now at hand."

Ans. This is a weighty observation! yet withal it is evident that he opposeth the abiding of the Spirit with them as a comforter to his own bodily presence with them for that end. His was for a season, the other to endure for ever. And I desire to know how our Saviour Christ comes or enters into the souls or hearts of men but by his Spirit, and how these things come here to be distinguished. But,—

2. He says, "By the abiding of the Comforter with them for ever, he doth not mean his perpetual abode in their hearts, or the heart of any particular man, but his constant abiding in the world, in and with the gospel and the children thereof: in respect of which he saith of himself elsewhere, 'I am with you always, even to the end of the world;' as if he should have said, 'This the purpose of my Father in sending me into the world requires that I should make no long stay in it. I am now upon my return. But when I come to my Father, I will intercede for you, and he will send you another Comforter, upon better terms for staying and continuing with you than those on which I came; for he shall be sent, not to be taken out of the world by death, but to make his residence with and among you, my friends and faithful ones, for ever.' Now, from such an abiding of the Holy Ghost with them as this cannot be inferred his perpetual abiding with any one personal believer determinately, much less with every one."

Ans. 1. It was evident before that this promise was made to the disciples of Christ as believers, to quicken and strengthen their failing, drooping faith, in and under that great trial of losing the presence of their Master which they were to undergo; and being made unto them as believers, though upon a particular occasion, is made to all believers for "a quatenus ad omne valet argumentum."

2. It is no less evident that, according to the interpretation here, without the least attempt of proof, importunately suggested, the promise is no way suited to give the least encouragement or consolation unto the disciples, in reference to the condition upon the account whereof it is now so solemnly given them. It is all one as if our Saviour should have said, "You are sadly troubled indeed, yea, your hearts are filled with trouble and fear, because I have told you that I must leave you. Be not so dejected. I have kept you whilst I have

been with you in the world, and now I go away, and will send the Holy Spirit into the world; and, whatsoever becomes of you, or any of you, whether ye have any consolation or no, he shall abide in the world, perhaps, with some or other (that is, if any do believe, which it may be some will, it may be not) until the end and consummation of it."

3. Is this promise of sending the Holy Spirit given to the apostles, or is it not? If you say not, assign whom it is given or made unto. Christ spake it to them, and doubtless they thought he intended them, and it was wholly suited to their condition. If it were made unto them, is it not in the letter of the promise affirmed that the Spirit shall abide with them for ever to whom it was given? If there be *any subject* of this promise in receiving the Spirit, he must of necessity keep his residence and abode with it for ever. The whole design of this section is to put the persons to whom this promise is made into the dark, that we may not see them; yea, to deny that it is made to any persons at all, as the recipient subject of the grace thereof. He tells you that "he abides in the world." How, I pray? Doubtless not as the unclean spirit, that goes up and down in dry places, seeking rest and finding none. Christ promiseth his Spirit to his church, not to the world,—to dwell in the hearts of his, not to wander up and down. Nay, he abides with the apostles and their spiritual posterity; that is, believers, in our Saviour's interpretation, John xvii. 20. Are they, then, and their posterity, (that is, believers), the persons to whom this promise is made, and who are concerned in it, with whom, as he is promised, he is to abide? This you can scarcely find out an answer to in the whole discourse. He tells you, indeed, the Holy Ghost was not to die, with such other rare notions; but for any persons particularly intended in this promise, we are still in the dark.

3. He tells us, "That from such an abiding of the Holy Ghost with them as this, cannot be enforced his perpetual abiding with any one person determinately." But what kind of abiding it is that he intends is not easily apprehended. If on the account of this promise he is given to any person, on the same account he is to abide with the same person for ever. That which he seems to intend is the presence of the Spirit in the administration of the word, to make it effectual unto them to whom it is delivered, when the promise is to give him as a comforter to them on whom he is bestowed. But he adds, sect. 14,—

4. "And lastly, The particle ἵνα doth not always import the certainty of the thing spoken of, by way of event (no, not when the speech is of God himself), but ofttimes the intention only of the agent: so that the words, 'That he may abide with you for ever' do not imply an absolute necessity of his abiding with them for ever,

but only this, that it should be the intent of him that should send him, and that he would send him in such a way, that, if they were true to their own interest, they might retain him and have his abode with them for ever. Turn the words any way, with any tolerable congruity, either to the scope of the place, manner of Scripture expression, principles of reason, and the doctrine of perseverance will be found to have nothing in them."

Ans. 1. This is the πάνσοφον φάρμακον, that, when all medicines will not heal, must serve to skin the wound given our adversaries' cause by the sword of the word: "The promise is made unto believers, indeed; but on such and such conditions as on the account whereof it may never be accomplished towards them." 2. This no way suits Mr Goodwin's interpretation of the place formerly mentioned and insisted on. If it be, as was said, only a promise of sending his Spirit into the world for the end by him insinuated, doubtless the word ἵνα must denote the event of the thing, and not an intention only that might fail of accomplishment; for let all or any individuals behave themselves how they will, it is certain, *as to the accomplishment* and event, that the Spirit of God shall be continued in the world, in the sense pleaded for. But it is not what is congruous to his own thoughts, but what may oppose ours (that is, the plain and obvious sense of the words), that he is concerned to make use of. It being not the sense of the place, but an escaping our argument from it, that lies in his design, he cares not how many contrary and inconsistent interpretations he gives of it. "Hæc non successit, aliâ aggrediemur viâ." The word ἵνα denotes, as is confessed, the intention of Christ in sending the Spirit; that is, that he intends to send him to believers, so as that he should abide with them for ever. Now, besides the impossibility in general that the intention of God, or of the Lord Christ, as God and man, should be frustrate, whence in particular should it come to pass he should fail in this his intention? "I will send you the Holy Spirit, to abide with you for ever;" that is, "I intend to send you the Holy Spirit, that he may abide with you for ever." What, now, should hinder this? "Why, it is given them upon condition that they be 'true to their own interest, and take care to retain him.'" What is that, I pray? "Why, that they continue in faith, obedience, repentance, and close walking with God." But to what end is it that he is promised unto them? is it not to teach them, to work in them faith, obedience, repentance, and close walking with God, to sanctify them throughout, and preserve them blameless to the end, making them "meet for the inheritance of the saints in light?" "In case they obey, believe, etc., the Holy Ghost is promised unto them, to abide with them, to cause them to obey, believe, repent, etc." 3. The intention of Christ for the sending of the Spirit, and his abiding for ever with

them to whom he is sent, is but one and the same; and if any frustration of his intention do fall out, it may most probably interpose as to his sending of the Spirit, not as to the Spirit's continuance with them to whom he is sent, which is asserted absolutely upon the account of his sending him. He sends him ἵνα μένῃ. His abode is the end of his sending; which, if he be sent, shall be obtained.

Upon the whole, doubtless, it will be found that the doctrine of perseverance finds so much for its establishment in this place of Scripture and promise of our Saviour, that by no art or cunning it will be prevailed withal to let go its interest therein. And though many attempts be made to turn and wrest this testimony of our Saviour several ways, and those contrary to and inconsistent with one another, yet it abides to look straight forward to the proof and confirmation of the truth, that lies not only in the womb and sense of it, but in the very mouth and literal expression of it also. I suppose it is evident to all that Mr Goodwin knows not what to say to it, nor what sense to fix upon. At first it is made to the apostles, not to all believers; then, when this will not serve the turn, there being a concession in that interpretation destructive to his whole cause, it is made as a privilege to the church, not to any individual persons; but yet, for fear that this privilege must be vested in some individuals, it is denied that it is made to any, but only is a promise of the Spirit's abode in the world with the word; but, perhaps some thoughts coming upon him that this will no way suit the scope of the place, nor be suited to the intendment of Christ, it is lastly added, that let it be made to whom it will, it is conditional, though there be not the least intimation of any condition in the text or context, and that [condition] by him assigned be coincident with the thing itself promised! But hereof so far; and so our second testimony. The testimony of the Son abides still by the truth for the confirmation whereof it is produced; and in the mouth of these two witnesses, the abiding of the Spirit with believers to the end is established.

Add hereunto, THIRDLY, The testimony of the third that bears witness in heaven, and who also comes near and bears witness to this truth in the hearts of believers, even of the Spirit itself; and so I shall leave it sealed under the testimony of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. As the other two gave in their testimony in a word of promise, so the Spirit doth in a real work of performance; wherein, as he bears a distinct testimony of his own, the saints having a peculiar communion and fellowship with him therein, so he is, as the common seal of Father and Son, set unto that truth which by their testimony they have confirmed. There are, indeed, sundry things whereby he confirms and establisheth the saints in the assurance of his abode with them for ever. I shall at present mention that one

eminent work of his, which, being given unto them, he doth accomplish to this very end and purpose, and that is his sealing of them to the day of redemption;—a work it is, often in the Scripture mentioned, and still upon the account of assuring the salvation of believers: 2 Cor. i. 22, "Who hath also sealed us." Having mentioned the certainty, unchangeableness, and efficacy, of all the promises of God in Christ, and the end to be accomplished and brought about by them,—namely, the "glory of God in believers" (verse 20, "All the promises of God in him are yea, and in him amen, unto the glory of God by us"),—the apostle acquaints the saints with one foundation of the security of their interest in those promises, whereby the end mentioned, "the glory of God by them," should be accomplished. This he ascribes to the efficacy of the Spirit, bestowed on them in sundry works of his grace, which he reckoneth, verses 21, 22. Among them this is one, that *he seals them.* As to *the nature of this sealing*, and what that act of the Spirit of grace is that is so called, I shall not now insist upon it. The end and use of sealing is more aimed at in this expression than the nature of it,—what it imports than wherein it consists. Being a term *forensical*, and translated from the use and practice of men in their civil transactions, the use and end of it may easily, from the original rise thereof, be demonstrated. Sealing amongst men hath a twofold use:—First, To give *secrecy* and *security* (in things that are under present consideration) to the things sealed. And this is the first use of sealing, by a seal set upon the things sealed. Of this kind of sealing chiefly have we that long discourse of Salmasius, in the vindication of his *Jus Atticum* against the animadversions of Heraldus. And, secondly, To give an assurance or faith for what is, by them that seal, to be done. In the first sense are things sealed up in bags and in treasuries, that they may be kept safe, none daring to break open their seals. In the latter are all promissory engagements confirmed, established, and made unalterable, wherein men, either in conditional compacts or testamentary dispositions, do oblige themselves. These are the *Sigilla appensa* that are yet in use in all deeds, enfeoffments, and the like instruments in law. And with men, if this be done, their engagements are accounted inviolable. And because all men have not that truth, faithfulness, and honesty, as to make good even their sealed engagements, the whole race of mankind hath consented unto the establishment of laws and governors, amongst others to this end, that all men may be compelled to stand to their sealed promises. Hence, whatsoever the nature of it be, and in what particular soever it doth consist, the end and use of this work, in this special acceptation, is taken evidently in the latter sense from its use amongst men. Expressed it is upon the mention of the promises, 2 Cor. i. 20. To secure believers of their certain and infallible accomplishment unto

them, the apostle tells them of this sealing of the Spirit, whereby the promises are irrevocably confirmed unto them to whom they are made, as is the case among the sons of men. Suitably, Eph. i. 13, he saith they are "sealed by the Holy Spirit of promise;" that is, who is promised unto us, and who confirms to us all the promises of God, Heb. ix. 14. That the other end of sealing also, safety and preservation, is designed therein, secondarily, appears from the appointed season whereunto this sealing shall be effectual. It is "to the day of redemption," Eph. iv. 30; until the saints are brought to the enjoyment of the full, whole, and complete purchase made for them by Christ when he "obtained for them eternal redemption." And this is a real testimony which the Holy Spirit gives to his own abiding with the saints for ever. The work he accomplisheth in them and upon them is on set purpose designed to assure them hereof, and to confirm them in the faith of it.

Unto an argument from this sealing of the Spirit, thus proposed, "Those who are sealed shall certainly be saved," Mr Goodwin excepts sundry things, chap. xi. sect. 42, p. 255–257; which, because they are applied to blur that interpretation of the words of the Holy Ghost which I have insisted on, I shall briefly remove out of the way, that they may be no farther offensive to the meanest sealed one.

He answers, then, first, by distinguishing the major proposition thus: "They who are sealed shall certainly be saved with such a sealing which is unchangeable by any intervenience whatsoever, as of sin and apostasy, so that they cannot lose their faith; but if the sealing be only such the continuance whereof depends on the faith of the sealed, and consequently may be reversed or withdrawn, it no way proves that all they who are partakers of it must of necessity retain their faith. Therefore," saith he, secondly, "we answer farther, that the sealing with the Spirit spoken of is the latter kind of sealing, not the former,—that is, which depends upon the faith of those that are sealed,—as in the beginning or first impression of it, so in the duration or continuance of it; and consequently there is none other certainty of its continuance but only the continuance of the said faith, which being uncertain, the sealing depending on it must needs be uncertain also. That the sealing mentioned depends upon the faith of the sealed is evident, because it is said, 'In whom also, after ye believed, ye were sealed with the Spirit of promise.'"

Ans. I dare say there is no honest man that would take it well at the hand of Mr Goodwin, or any else, that should attempt, by distinctions, or any other way, to alleviate or take off the credit of his truth and honesty in the performance of all those things whereunto, and for the confirmation whereof, he hath set his seal. What acceptation a like attempt in reference to the Spirit of God is like to find with him, he may do well to consider. In the meantime, he

prevails not with us to discredit this work of his grace in the least; for,—

1. This supposal of such *interveniencies* of sin and wickedness in the saints as are inconsistent with the life of faith and the favour of God, as also of apostasy, are but a poor, mean insinuation for the begging of the thing in question, which will never be granted on any such terms. An interveniency of apostasy,—that is, defection from the faith,—is not handsomely supposed whilst men continue in the faith.

2. That which is given for the confirmation of their faith, and on set purpose to add continuance to it, as this is, cannot depend on the condition of the continuance of their faith. The Holy Ghost seals them to the day of redemption, confirming and establishing thereby an infallible continuance of their faith; but, it seems, upon condition of their continuance in the faith. *Cui fini?* Of what hitherto is said, this is the sum: "If they who are sealed apostatize into sin and wickedness, they shall not be saved, notwithstanding that they have been sealed." And this must pass for an answer to our argument, proving that they cannot so apostatize because they are sealed on purpose to preserve and secure them from that condition. Men need not go far to seek for answers to any argument, if such as these (pure beggings of the thing in question and argued) will suffice.

3. Neither doth "the beginning or first impression of the sealing" depend upon their faith any otherwise but as believers are the subject of it, which is not to have any kind of dependence upon it, either as to its nature or use. Neither doth that place of the apostle, Eph. i. 13, "After that ye believed ye were sealed," prove any such thing, unless this general axiom be first established, that all things which in order of nature are before and after have the connection of cause and effect, or at least of condition and event, between them. It proves, indeed, that their believing is in order of nature antecedent to their sealing, respecting the use of it here mentioned; but this proves not at all that faith is the condition of sealing, the bestowing of faith and the grant of this seal to establish it being both acts depending merely, solely, and distinctly, on the free grace of God in Christ. Though faith in order of nature go before hope, yet is no hope bestowed on men on the condition of believing. The truth is, both faith and sealing, and all other spiritual mercies, as to the good-will of God bestowing them, are at once granted us in Jesus Christ; but as to our reception of them, and the actual instating of our souls in the enjoyment of them, or rather as to the exerting of themselves in us, they have that order which either the nature of the things themselves requires, or the sovereign will of God hath allotted to them. Neither doth sealing bespeak any grace in us, but a peculiar improvement of the grace bestowed on us. So that,—

4. We refuse the answer suggested by Mr Goodwin, "That sealing depends" (that is, in his sense) "upon believing, as to the first grant of it, but not as to the continuance thereof," and reject his supposal of "one that hath truly believed making shipwreck of his faith," as too importune a cry, or begging of that which it is evident cannot be proved. I shall add only, that Mr Goodwin granting here the continuance of faith to be a thing "uncertain," which is a word to express a very weak probability of a thing, is much fallen off from his former confident expression of the "only remote possibility" of believers falling away. That their falling away should be scarcely possible, and yet their continuance in the faith very uncertain, is somewhat uncouth. But this is the foundation of that great consolation which Mr Goodwin's doctrine is so pregnant and teeming withal, that it even groans to be delivered. "Their continuance in believing is uncertain; therefore they must needs rejoice and be filled with consolation." But he answers farther:—

"I answer farther, by way of exception, that the sealing we speak of is neither granted by God unto believers themselves upon any such terms as that upon no occasion or occasions whatsoever, as of the greatest and most horrid sins committed and long continued in by them, or the like, it should ever be interrupted or effaced; for this is contrary to many plain texts of Scripture, and particularly unto all those where either apostates from God, or evil-doers and workers of iniquity, are threatened with the loss of God's favour and of the inheritance of life, such as Heb. x., etc."

Ans. 1. It is the intent and purpose of God that the sealing of believers shall abide with them for ever; whence comes it to pass that his purposes do not stand, and that he doth not fulfil his pleasure? "It is not that he changeth, but that men are changed;—that is, the beginning of the change is not in him; occasion of it is administered unto him by men." When his sealing is removed from believers, doth God still purpose that it shall continue with them, or no? If he doth, then he purposeth that shall be which is not, which it is his will shall not be; and he continues in his vain purpose to eternity. Or, if he ceases to purpose, how is it that he is not changed? Such things bespeak a change in the sons of men, which we thought had been incompatible with the perfection of the divine nature, even that he should will and purpose one thing at one time, and another, yea the clean contrary, at another. "Yea, but the reason of it is, because the men concerning whom his purposes are do change." This *salves* not the *immutability* of God. Though he doth not change from any new consideration in himself and from himself, yet he doth from obstructions in his way and to his thoughts in the creatures;—yea, instead of *salving his unchangeableness,* this is destructive to his omnipotency.

2. This whole answer is a supposal that God may alter his purpose of confirming men in grace, if they be not confirmed in grace; or, that though God's purpose be to seal them to the day of redemption, yet they may not continue nor be preserved thereunto; and then God's purpose of their continuance ceaseth also. This is,—

3. More evident in his second answer, by way of exception, which is made up of these two parts:—first, A begging of the *main*, and, upon the matter, *only* thing in question, by supposing that believers may fall into the most horrible sins, and continue in them to the end; so proving, with great evidence and perspicuity, that believers may fall away, because they may fall away! and, second, A suggestion of his own judgment to the contrary, and his supposal that it is confirmed by some texts of Scripture; which, God assisting, shall be delivered from this imputation hereafter. And these two do make up so clear an answer to the argument in hand that a man knows not well what to reply! Let us take it for granted that believers may fall away, and how shall we prevent Mr Goodwin from proving it! But he adds farther:—

"Believers are said to be sealed by the Holy Spirit of God against, or until, or for (εἰς) the day of redemption; because that holiness which is wrought in them by the Spirit of God qualifies them, puts them into a present and actual capacity of partaking in that joy and glory which the great day of the full redemption of the saints (that is, of those who lived and died, and shall be found such) shall bring with it; and it is called the earnest of their inheritance."

Ans. How εἰς comes to be "against" or "for," or to denote the matter spoken of, and what all this is to the purpose in hand, he shows not. The aim of him the words are spoken of, and the uninterrupted continuance of the work mentioned to the end expressed, seem rather to be intended in the whole coherence of the words. Neither is the use of sealing to prepare any thing for such a time, but to secure and preserve it thereunto. He that hath a conveyance sealed unto him is not only capacitated for the present to receive the estate conveyed, but is principally assured of a right and title for a continued enjoyment of it, not to be reversed. It is not the nature of this work of the Holy Ghost, wherein it is coincident with other acts of his grace, but the particular use of it, as it is a sealing, and God's intendment by it, to confirm us to the day of redemption, that comes under our consideration. If it were a season to inquire wherein it consists, I suppose we should scarce close with Mr Goodwin's description of it, namely, "that it is a qualifying of men, and putting them in an actual capacity to partake of joy," etc. He is the first I know of that gave this description of it, and probably the last that will do so. Of the "earnest of the Spirit" in its proper place.

What he adds in the last place, namely, "If the apostle's intent

had been to inform the Ephesians that the gift of the Holy Spirit, which they had received from God, was the earnest of their inheritance, upon such terms that no unworthiness or wickedness whatsoever on their parts could ever hinder the actual collation of this inheritance upon them, he had plainly prevaricated with that most serious admonition wherein he addresses himself to them afterward, 'For this ye know, that no whoremonger,' etc., 'hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ.'" This, I say, is of the same alloy with what went before; for,—

1. Here is the same begging of the question as before, and that upon a twofold account:—(1.) In supposing that believers may fall into such sins and unworthiness as are inconsistent with the state of acceptation with God; which is the very thing he hath to prove. (2.) In supposing that if believers are sealed up infallibly to redemption, the exhortations to the avoidance of sins in themselves, and to all that continue in them, destructive to salvation, are in vain; which is a figment in a case somewhat alike (as to the reason of it), rejected by men that knew nothing of the nature of God's promises nor his commands, nor the accommodation of them both to the fulfilling in believers "all the good pleasure of his goodness."

2. The assurance the apostle gives of freedom from the wrath of God is inseparably associated with that assurance that he gives that we, according to the tenor of the covenant of grace, shall not be left in or given up to such ways as wherein that wrath is not to be avoided.

From this latter testimony this argument also doth flow: Those who are sealed of God to the day of redemption shall certainly be preserved thereunto, their preservation being the end and aim of God in his sealing of them. Mr Goodwin's answer to this proposition is, "That they shall be so preserved in case they fall not into abominable sins and practices, and so apostatize from the faith;" that is, in case they be preserved, they shall be preserved. But wherein their preservation should consist, if not in their effectual deliverance from such ways and courses, is not declared. That all believers are so sealed, and to that end, as above, is the plain testimony of the Scripture; and therefore our conclusion is undeniably evinced.

Thus have we, through the Lord's assistance, freed the triple testimony of Father, Son, and Spirit, given to the truth under consideration, from all objections and exceptions put in thereunto; so that we hope the mouth of iniquity may be stopped, and that the cause of the truth in hand is secured for ever. It is a fearful thing to contend with God. "Let God be true, but every man a liar."

CHAPTER VIII.

THE INDWELLING OF THE SPIRIT.

Entrance into the digression concerning the indwelling of the Spirit—The manner of the abode of the Spirit with them on whom he is bestowed—Grounds of the demonstrations of the truth—The indwelling of the Spirit proved from the promises of it—Express affirmations of the same truth—Ps. li. 11; Rom. viii. 9, opened—Verses 11, 15; 1 Cor. ii. 12; Gal. iv. 6, opened—2 Tim. i. 14—The Spirit in his indwelling, distinguished from all his graces—Evasions removed—Rom. v. 5 explained—The Holy Ghost himself, not the grace of the Holy Ghost, there intended—Rom. viii. 11 opened—Gal. v. 22—A personality ascribed to the Spirit in his indwelling: 1. In personal appellations, 1 John iv. 4; John xiv. 16, 17—2. Personal operations—Rom. viii. 11, 16, explained—3. Personal circumstances—The Spirit dwells in the saints as in a temple, 1 Cor. iii. 16, vi. 19—The indwelling of the Spirit farther demonstrated from the signal effects ascribed in the Scripture to his so doing; as, 1. Union with Christ—Union with Christ, wherein it consisteth—Union with Christ by the indwelling of the same Spirit in him and us—This proved from, (1.) Scriptural declarations of it—2 Pet. i. 4, how we are made partakers of the divine nature—Union expressed by eating the flesh and drinking the blood of Christ—John vi. 56 opened—The prayer of our Saviour for the union of his disciples, John xvii. 21—The union of the persons in the Trinity with themselves—(2.) Scriptural illustrations for the manifestation of union—The union of head and members, what it is, and wherein it doth consist—Of the union between husband and wife, and our union with Christ represented thereby—Of a tree and its branches—Life and quickening given by the indwelling Spirit, in quickening, life, and suitable operations—2. Direction and guidance given by the indwelling Spirit—Guidance or direction twofold—The several ways whereby the Spirit gives guidance and direction unto them in whom he dwells—The first way, by giving a new understanding, or a new spiritual light upon the understanding—What light men may attain without the particular guidance of the Spirit—Saving embracements of particular truths from the Spirit, 1 John ii. 20, 27—The way whereby the Spirit leads believers into truth—Consequences of the want of this guidance of the Spirit—3. The third thing received from the indwelling Spirit, supportment—The way whereby the Spirit gives supportment: (1.) By bringing to mind the things spoken by Christ for their consolation, John xiv. 16, 17, 26—(2.) By renewing his graces in them as to strength—The benefits issuing and flowing from thence—Restraint given by the indwelling Spirit, and how—The continuance of the Spirit with believers for the renewal of grace proved—John iv. 14, that promise of our Saviour at large opened—The water there promised is the Spirit—The state of them on whom he is bestowed—Spiritual thirst twofold—Isa. lxv. 13; 1 Pet. ii. 2—The reasons why men cannot thirst again who have once drunk of the Spirit explained—Mr G.'s exceptions considered and removed—The same work farther carried on; as also the indwelling of the Spirit in believers farther demonstrated by the inferences made from thence—The first: Our persons temples of the Holy Ghost, to be disposed of in all ways of holiness—The second: Wisdom to try spirits—The ways, means, and helps, whereby the saints discern between the voice of Christ and the voice of Satan.

HAVING showed that the Holy Spirit is purchased for us by the oblation of Christ, and bestowed on us through his intercession, to

abide with us for ever,—a truth confirmed by the unquestionable testimonies of the Father, Son, and Spirit,—I shall, in the next place (I hope to the advantage and satisfaction of the Christian reader), a little turn aside to consider *how* and in what manner he abideth with them on whom he is bestowed, together with some eminent acts and effects of his grace, which he putteth forth and exerteth in them with whom he abideth, all tending to their preservation in the love and favour of God. A doctrine it is of no small use and importance in our walking with God, as we shall find in our pursuit of it. And therefore, though not appearing so directly argumentative and immediately subservient to the promotion of the dispute in hand, yet as tending to the establishment, guidance, and consolation, of them who do receive it, and to the cherishing, increasing, and strengthening of the faith thereof, I cannot but conceive it much conducing to the carrying on of the main intendment of this whole undertaking. I say, then, upon the purchase made of all good things for the elect by Christ, the holy and blessed Spirit of God is given to them, to dwell in them personally, for the accomplishment of all the ends and purposes of his economy towards them,—to make them meet for, and to bring them unto, the inheritance of the saints in light: personally, I say, in our persons (not by assumption of our nature, but giving us *mystical* union with Christ, not personal union with himself; that is, not one personality with him, which is impious and blasphemous to imagine), by a gracious inhabitation, distinct from his *essential* filling all things, and his *energetical* operation of all things as he will, as shall afterwards be declared. Now, this being a doctrine of pure revelation, our demonstrations of it must be merely scriptural; and such (as will instantly appear) we have provided in great plenty. In the carrying on, then, of this undertaking, I shall do these two things:—I. Produce *some* of those many texts of Scripture which are pregnant of this truth. II. Show what great things do issue from thence and are affirmed in reference thereunto, being inferences of a supposal thereof, all conducing to the preservation of believers in the love and favour of God unto the end.

For the first, I shall refer them to four heads: unto,—1. *Promises* that he should so dwell in us; 2. *Positive affirmations* that he doth so; 3. Those texts that hold out *his being distinguished from all his graces and gifts in his so doing;* 4. Those that *ascribe a personality to him in his indwelling in us.* Of each sort one or two places may suffice.

I. 1. The indwelling of the Spirit is the great and solemn promise of the covenant of grace; the manner of it we shall afterward evince: Ezek. xxxvi. 27, "I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes." In the verse foregoing he tells them, "He will give them a new heart, and a new spirit;" which, because it may be

interpreted of a renewed frame of spirit (though it rather seems to be the renewing Spirit that is intended, as also chap. xi. 19), he expressly points out and differences the spirit he will give them from all works of grace whatsoever, in that appellation of him, "'My Spirit,' my Holy Spirit; him will I put within you: I will give him or place him *in interiori vestro*, 'in your inmost part,' in your heart; or *in visceribus vestris*, 'in your bowels' (as the soul is frequently signified by expressions of sensual things), 'within you.'" In his giving us a new heart and new spirit, by putting in us his Spirit, certainly more is intended than a mere working of gracious qualities in our hearts by his Spirit; which he may do, and yet be no more in us than in the greatest blasphemer in the world. And this, in the carrying of it on to its accomplishment, God calls his covenant: Isa. lix. 21, "This is my covenant with them, saith the LORD; My Spirit that is upon thee shall not depart from thee;"—"Upon thee, in thee, that dwelleth in thee, as was promised." And this promise is evidently renewed by the Lord Christ to his disciples, clearly also interpreting what that Spirit is which is mentioned in the promise of the covenant: Luke xi. 13, "Your heavenly Father will give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him" of him; that is, that pray to him for the Holy Spirit. Our Saviour instructs his disciples to ask the Holy Spirit of God upon the account of his being so promised; as Acts ii. 33. All our supplications are to be regulated by the promise, Rom. viii. 27. And surely he who (as shall afterward appear) did so plentifully and richly promise the bestowing of this Spirit on all those that believe on him, did not instruct them to ask for any inferior mercy and grace under that name. That Spirit which the Lord Christ instructs us to ask of the Father is the Spirit which he hath promised to bestow so on us as that he shall dwell in us. That the Spirit which Christ instructs us to ask for, and which himself promises to send unto us, is the Holy Ghost himself, the Holy Spirit of promise, by whom we are sealed to the day of redemption, I suppose will require no labour to prove; what is needful to this end shall be afterward insisted on.

2. Positive affirmations that he doth so dwell in and remain with the saints are the second ground of the truth we assert. I shall name one or two testimonies of that kind: Ps. li. 11, saith David, "Take not thy Holy Spirit from me." It is the Spirit, and his presence as unto sanctification, not in respect of prophecy or any other gift whatever, that he is treating of with God. All the graces of the Spirit being almost dead and buried in him, he cries aloud that He whose they are, and who alone is able to revive and quicken them, may not be taken from him. With him, in him, he was, or he could not be taken from him. And though the gifts or graces of the Spirit only may be intended, where mention is made of giving or bestowing

of him sometimes, yet when the saints beg of God that he would continue his Spirit with them, though they have grieved him and provoked him, that no more is intended but some gift or grace, is not so clear. I know men possessed with prejudice against this truth will think easily to evade these testimonies by the distinction of the person and graces of the Spirit. Wherefore, for the manner how he is with them with whom he is, the apostle informs us, Rom. viii. 9, "Ye are in the Spirit" (that is, spiritual men, opposed to being "in the flesh,"—that is, carnal, unregenerate, unreconciled, and enemies to God), "if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." Not only the thing itself is asserted, but the weight of our regeneration and acceptation with God through Jesus Christ is laid upon it. If the Spirit *dwell* in us we are *spiritual*, and belong to Christ; otherwise, if not, we are none of his. This the apostle farther confirms, verse 11, "If the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you." I know not how the person of the Holy Ghost can be more clearly deciphered than here he is, "The Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead." Why that is mentioned shall afterward be considered. And this is the Spirit, as he bears testimony of himself, dwells in believers; which is all we say, and, without farther curious inquiry, desire to rest therein. Doubtless it were better for men to captivate their understandings to the obedience of faith than to invent distinctions and evasions to escape the power of so many plain texts of Scripture, and those literally and properly, not figuratively and metaphorically, expressing the truth contained in them; which, though it may be done sometimes, yet is not, in a constant uniform tenor of expression, anywhere the manner of the Holy Ghost. The apostle also affirms farther, verse 15, that believers "receive the Spirit of adoption, whereby they cry, Abba, Father;" which, being a work within them, cannot be wrought and effected by adoption itself, which is an extrinsical relation. Neither can adoption and the Spirit of adoption be conceived to be the same. He also farther affirms it, 1 Cor. ii. 12, "We have received the Spirit which is of God, that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God;"—"We have so received him as that he abides with us, to teach us, to acquaint our hearts with God's dealing with us; bearing witness with our spirits to the condition wherein we are in reference to our favour from God and acceptation with him." And the same he most distinctly asserts, Gal. iv. 6, "God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, Abba, Father." The distinct economy of the Father, Son, and Spirit, in the work of adoption, is here clearly discovered. He is sent, "sent of God," that is, the Father. That name is personally to be appropriated when it is distinguished, as here, from Son and Spirit. That is the Father's work, that work of his love; he sends him. He hath sent

him as the "Spirit of his Son," procured by him for us, promised by him to us, proceeding from him as to his personal subsistence, and sent by him as to his office of adoption and consolation. Then, whither the Father hath sent the Spirit of his Son, where he is to abide and make his residence, is expressed. It is into "our hearts," saith the apostle; there he dwells and abides. And, lastly, what there he doth is also manifested. He sets them on work in whom he is, gives them privilege for it, ability to it, encouragement in it, causing them to cry, "Abba, Father." Once and again to Timothy doth the same apostle assert the same truth: 2 Epist. i. 14, "That good thing committed unto thee keep by the Holy Ghost which dwelleth in us." The Lord knowing how much of our life and consolation depends on this truth, redoubles his testimony of it, that we might receive it,—even we, who are dull and slow of heart to believe the things that are written.

3. Whereas some may say, "It cannot be denied but that the Spirit dwells in believers, but yet this is not *personally*, but only by his grace;" I might reply that this indeed, and upon the matter, is not to distinguish but to deny what is positively affirmed. To say the Spirit dwells in us, but not the person of the Spirit, is not to distinguish *de modo*, but to deny the thing itself. To say, "The graces, indeed, of the Spirit are in us" (not "dwell in us," for an accident is not properly said to *dwell* in its subject), "but the Spirit itself doth not dwell in us," is expressly to cast down what the word sets up. If such distinctions ought to be of force, to evade so many positive and plain texts of Scripture as have been produced, it may well be questioned whether any truth be capable of proof from Scripture or no. Yet I say farther, to obviate such objections, and to prevent all quarrellings for the future, the Scripture itself, as to this business of the Spirit's indwelling, plainly distinguisheth between the Spirit itself and his graces. He is, I say, distinguished from them, and that in respect to his indwelling: Rom. v. 5, "The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us." The Holy Ghost is given to us to dwell in us, as hath been abundantly declared, and shall yet farther be demonstrated. Here he is mentioned together with the love of God, and his shedding thereof abroad in our hearts,—that is, with his graces; and is as clearly distinguished and differenced from them as cause and effect. Take the love of God in either sense that is controverted about this place,—for our love to God or a sense of his love to us,—and it is an eminent grace of the Holy Spirit. If, then, by "The Holy Ghost given unto us," ye understand only the grace of the Holy Ghost, he being said to be given because that is given, then this must be the sense of the place, "The grace of the Holy Ghost is shed abroad in our hearts by the grace of the Holy Ghost that is given to us." Farther; if by "The

Holy Ghost" be meant only his grace, I inquire what grace it is [that is] here by the expression intended? Is it the same with that expressed, "The love of God?" This were to confound the efficient cause with its effect. Is it any other grace that doth produce the great work mentioned? Let us know what that grace is that hath this power and energy in its hand of shedding abroad the love of God in our hearts. So Rom. viii. 11, "He shall quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you." This quickening of our mortal bodies is generally confessed to be (and the scope of the place enforceth that sense) our spiritual quickening in our mortal bodies, mention being made of our bodies in analogy to the body of Christ; by his death we have life and quickening. Doubtless, then, it is a grace of the Spirit that is intended; yea, the habitual principle of all graces. And this is wrought in us by the Spirit that dwelleth in us. There is not any grace of the Spirit whereby he may dwell in men antecedent to his quickening of them. Spiritual graces have not their residence in dead souls. So that this must be the Spirit himself dwelling in us that is here intended, and that personally; or the sense of the words must be, "The grace of quickening our mortal bodies is wrought in us by the grace of quickening our mortal bodies that dwelleth in us;" which is plainly to confound the cause and effect. Besides, it is the same Spirit that raised up Jesus from the dead that is intended; which, doubtless, was not any inherent grace, but the Spirit of God himself, working by the exceeding greatness of his power. Thus much is hence cleared: Antecedent in order of nature to our quickening, there is a Spirit given to us to dwell in us. Every efficient cause hath at least the precedency of its effect. No graces of the Spirit are bestowed on us before our quickening; which is the preparation and fitting of the subject for the receiving of them, the planting of the root that contains them virtually, and brings them forth actually in their order. Gal. v. 22, 23, all graces whatsoever come under the name of the "fruit of the Spirit;" that is, which the Spirit in us brings forth, as the root doth the fruit, which in its so doing is distinct therefrom. Many other instances might be given; but these may suffice.

4. There is a *personality* ascribed to the Holy Ghost in his dwelling in us, and that in such a way as cannot be ascribed to any created grace, which is but a quality in a subject; and this the Scripture doth three ways:—(1.) In *personal appellations*; (2.) In *personal operations;* and (3.) In *personal circumstances.*

(1.) There are ascribed to the indwelling Spirit, in his indwelling, *personal appellations,* 1 John iv. 4, "He that is in you is greater than he that is in the world,"—μείζων ἐστὶν ὁ ἐν ὑμῖν. "He that is in you" is a personal denomination, which cannot be used of any grace or gracious habit whatsoever. So John xiv. 16, 17, "He shall abide with you,

he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you,"—Ὑμεῖς γινώσκετε αὐτὸ (τὸ Πνεῦμα τῆς ἀληθείας) καὶ ἐν ὑμῖν ἔσται. John xvi. 13, "But when the Spirit of truth is come,"—Ὅταν δὲ ἔλθῃ ἐκεῖνος, τὸ Πνεῦμα. His person is here as signally designed and expressed as in any place of Scripture, to what intent or purpose soever mentioned. Neither is it possible to apprehend that the Scripture would so often, so expressly, affirm the same thing in plain, proper words, if they were not to be taken in the sense which they hold out. The main emphasis of the expression lies upon the terms that are of a personal designation, and to evade the force of them by the forementioned distinction, which they seem signally to obviate and prevent, is to say what we please, so we may oppose what pleases us not.

(2.) *Personal operations*, such acts and actings as are proper to a person only, are ascribed to the Spirit in his indwelling. That place mentioned before, Rom. viii. 11, is clear hereunto, "But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you," or "by his indwelling Spirit," διὰ τοῦ ἐνοικοῦντος αὐτοῦ Πνεύματος ἐν ὑμῖν. "To quicken our mortal bodies" is a personal acting, and such as cannot be wrought but by an almighty agent; and this is ascribed to the Spirit as inhabiting, which is in order of nature antecedent to his quickening of us, as was manifested. And the same is asserted, verse 16, "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God." That Spirit that dwells in us, bears witness in us, a distinct witness by himself, distinguished from the testimony of our own spirits here mentioned, is either an act of our natural spirits, or gracious fruit of the Spirit of God in our hearts. If the first, what makes it in the things of God? Is any testimony of our natural spirits of any value to assure us that we are the children of God? If the latter, then is there here an immediate operation of the Spirit dwelling in our hearts, in witness-bearing, distinct from all the fruits of grace whatever. And on this account it is, that whereas, 1 John v. 7, 8, the Father, Son, and Spirit are said to bear witness in heaven, the Spirit is moreover peculiarly said to bear witness in the earth, together with the blood and water.

(3.) There are such *circumstances* ascribed to him in his indwelling as are proper only to that which is a person. I will instance only in one,—his dwelling in the saints as in a temple: 1 Cor. iii. 16, "Ye are the temple of God, the Spirit of God dwelleth in you;" that is, as in a temple. So plainly, chap. vi. 19, "Your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God:" giving us both the distinction of the person of the Spirit from the other persons, "he is given us of God;" and his residence with us, being so given, "he is in us;" as also the manner of his in-being, "as in a temple." Nothing can make a place a temple but the relation it hath

unto a deity. Graces, that are but qualifications of and qualities in a subject, cannot be said to dwell in a temple. This the Spirit doth, and therefore as a *voluntary agent* in a habitation, not as a *necessary or natural principle* in a subject. And though every act of his be omnipotent intensively, being the act of an omnipotent agent, yet he worketh not in the acts extensively to the utmost of his omnipotency. He exerteth and puts forth his power, and brings forth his grace, in the hearts of them with whom he dwells, as he pleaseth. To one he communicates more grace, to another less; yea, he gives more strength to one and the same person at one time and in one condition than at another, dividing to every one as he will, 1 Cor. xii. 11. And if this peculiar manner of his personal presence with his saints, distinct from his ubiquity or omnipresence, may not be believed, because not well by reason conceived, we shall lay a foundation for the questioning principles of faith which as yet we are not fallen out withal.

And this is our first manifestation of the truth concerning the indwelling of the Spirit in the saints, from the Scripture. The second will be from the signal issues and benefits which are asserted to arise from this indwelling of the Spirit in them; of which I shall give sundry instances.

II. 1. The first signal issue and effect which is ascribed to this indwelling of the Spirit is *union;* not a personal union with himself, which is impossible. He doth not assume our nature, and so prevent our personality, which would make us one person with him, but dwells in our persons, keeping his own and leaving us our personality infinitely distinct. But it is a *spiritual union,*—the great union mentioned so often in the gospel, that is the sole fountain of our blessedness,—our union with the Lord Christ, which we have thereby.

Many thoughts of heart there have been about this union,—what it is, wherein it doth consist, the causes, manner, and effects of it. The Scripture expresses it to be very eminent, near, durable, setting it out, for the most part, by similitudes and metaphorical illustrations, to lead poor weak creatures into some useful, needful acquaintance with that mystery, whose depths in this life they shall never fathom. That many in the days wherein we live have miscarried in their conceptions of it is evident. Some, to make out their imaginary union, have destroyed the person of Christ, and, fancying a way of uniting man to God by him, have left him to be neither God nor man. Others have destroyed the person of believers, affirming that in their union with Christ they lose their own personality,—that is, cease to be men, or at least these or those individual men.

I intend not now to handle it at large, but only (and that, I hope, without offence) to give in my thoughts concerning it, as far as it

receiveth light from and relateth unto what hath been before delivered concerning the indwelling of the Spirit, and that without the least contending about other ways of expression.

I say, then, this is that which gives us union with Christ, and that wherein it consists, even that the one and self-same Spirit dwells in him and us. The first saving illapse from God upon the hearts of the elect is the Holy Spirit. Their quickening is everywhere ascribed to the Spirit that is given unto them; there is not a quickening, a life-giving power, in a quality, a created thing. In the state of nature, besides gracious dispensations and habits in the soul inclining it to that which is good, and making it a suitable subject for spiritual operations, we want also a vital principle, which should actuate the disposed subject unto answerable operations.[1] This a quality cannot give. He that carries on the work of quickening doth also begin it, Rom. viii. 11. All graces whatever, as was said, are the "fruits of the Spirit," Gal. v. 22, 23; and therefore, in order of nature, are wrought in men consequentially to his being bestowed on them. Now, in the first bestowing of the Spirit we have union with Christ; the carrying on whereof consists in the farther manifestation and operations of the indwelling Spirit, which is called communion. To make this evident, that our union with Christ consists in this, the same Spirit dwelling in him and us, and that this is our union, let us take a view of it, first, from Scriptural *declarations* of it, and then, secondly, from Scripture *illustrations* of it, both briefly, being not my direct business in hand:—

First, (1.) Peter tells us that it is a *participation of the divine nature*, 2 Pet. i. 4. We are "by the promises made partakers of the divine nature;" that is, it is promised to be given unto us, which when we receive, we are made partakers of by the promises. That this participation of the divine nature (let it be interpreted how it will) is the same upon the matter with our union with Christ, is not questioned. That φύσις θεία should be only a gracious habit, quality, or disposition of soul in us, I cannot easily receive. That is somewhere called καινὴ κτίσις, the "new creature,"[2] but nowhere θεία φύσις, the "divine nature." The pretended high and spiritual, but indeed gross and carnal, conceits of some from hence, destructive to the nature of God and man, I shall not turn aside to consider. What that is of the divine nature, or wherein it doth consist, that we are made partakers of by the promises, I showed before. That the person of the holy and blessed Spirit is promised to us,—whence he is called the "Holy Spirit of promise," Eph. i. 13,—hath been, I say, by sundry evidences manifested. Upon the accomplishment of that promise, he coming to dwell in us, we are said in him, by the promises, to be made "partakers of the divine nature." We are θείας

[1] John v. 24; Eph. ii. 1, 2. [2] 2 Cor. v. 17.

κοινωνοὶ φύσεως, we have our communion with it. Our participation, then, of the divine nature being our union with Christ, consists in the dwelling of [the] same Spirit in him and in us, we receiving him by the promise for that end.

(2.) Christ tells us that this union arises from the eating of his flesh, and drinking of his blood: John vi. 56, "He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him." The mutual indwelling of Christ and his saints is their union. "This," saith Christ, "is from their 'eating my flesh, and drinking my blood.'" But how may this be done? Many were offended when this saying was spoken. Near and close trials of sincerity drive hypocrites into apostasy. From his, Christ takes away this scruple: Verse 63, "It is," saith he, "the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing." It is by the indwelling of the quickening Spirit, whereby we have a real participation of Christ, whereby he dwelleth in us and we in him. So,—

(3.) He prays for his disciples, John xvii. 21, "that they all may be one, as the Father is in him, and he in the Father, that they may be one in the Father and Son;" and verse 22, "Let them be one, even as we are one." And that ye may not think that it is only union with and among themselves that he presses for (though, indeed, that which gives them union with Christ gives them union one with another also, and that which constitutes them of the body unites them to the Head, and there is one body because there is one Spirit, Eph. iv. 4; which even Lombard himself had some notion of, in his assertion that charity, which is in us, is the person of the Holy Ghost, from that place of the apostle, "God is love"), I say he farther manifests that it is union with himself which he intends: John xvii. 23, "I in them," saith he, "and thou in me." This union, then, with him, our Saviour declares by, or at least illustrates by, resemblance unto his union with the Father. Whether this be understood of the union of the divine persons of Father and Son in the blessed Trinity (the union, I mean, that they have with themselves in their distinct personality, and not their unity of essence), or the union which was between Father and Son as incarnate, it comes all to one as to the declaration of that union we have with him. The Spirit is *Vinculum Trinitatis*, "The bond of the Trinity," as is commonly, and not inaptly spoken. Proceeding from both the other persons, being the love and power of them both, he gives that union to the trinity of persons, whose *substratum* and ground is the inestimable unity of essence wherein they are one. Or if you take it for the union of the Father with the Son incarnate, it is evident and beyond inquiry or dispute, that as the personal union of the Divine Word and the human nature was by the assumption of that nature into one personal substance with itself; so the person of the Father hath no

other union with the human nature of Christ, immediately and not by the union of his own nature thereunto in the person of his Son, but what consists in that indwelling of his Spirit in all fulness in the man Christ Jesus. Now, saith our Saviour, "This union I desire they may have with me, by the dwelling of the same Spirit in me and them, whereby I am in them, and they in me, as I am one with thee, O Father."

Secondly, The Scripture sets forth this union by many *illustrations*, given unto it from the things of the nearest union that are subject to our apprehension, giving the very terms of the things so united unto Christ and his in their union. I shall name some few of them:—

(1.) That of *head* and *members* making up one body is often insisted on. Christ is the head of his saints, and they, being many, are members of that one body, and of one another; as the apostle at large, 1 Cor. xii. 12, "As the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ." The body is one, and the saints are one body, yea, one Christ,—that is, mystical. They, then, are the body. What part is Christ? He is the head: 1 Cor. xi. 3, "The head of every man" (that is, every believer) "is Christ;" he is "the head of the church, and the saviour of the body," Eph. v. 23; he is "the head of the body, the church," Col. i. 18. This relation of head and members, I say, between Christ and his, holds out the union that is between them, which consists in their being so. As the head and the members make one body, so Christ and his members make one mystical Christ. Whence, then, is it that the head and members have this their union, whereby they become one body? wherein doth it consist? Is it that from the head the members do receive their influences of life, sense, and guidance, as the saints do from Christ? Eph. iv. 15, 16, they "grow up into him in all things, which is the Head: from whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part," groweth up to a holy increase. So also Col. ii. 19, "Holding the Head, from which all the body by joints and bands having nourishment ministered, and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God." But evidently this is their communion, whereunto union is supposed. Our union with Christ cannot consist in the communication of any thing to us as members, from him the head; but it must be in that which constitutes him and us in the relation of head and members. He is our head antecedently in order of nature to any communication of grace from him as a head, and yet not antecedently to our union with him. Herein, then, consists the union of head and members, that though they are many, and have many offices, places, and dependencies,

there is but one living, quickening soul in head and members. If a man could be imagined so big and tall as that his feet should stand upon the earth, and his head reach the starry heavens, yet, having but one soul, he is still but one man. As, then, one living soul makes the natural head and members to be one, one body; so one quickening Spirit, dwelling in Christ and his members, gives them their union, and makes them one Christ, one body. This is clear from 1 Cor. xii. 12, 13. As "the first man Adam was made a living soul," so "the last Adam is made a quickening spirit," chap. xv. 45.

(2.) Of *husband* and *wife*. The union that is between them sets out the union betwixt Christ and his saints. There is not any one more frequent illustration of it in the Scripture, the Holy Ghost pursuing the allusion in all the most considerable concernments of it, and holding it out as the most solemn representation of the union that is between Christ and his church: Eph. v. 31, 32, "For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church." The transition is eminent from the conjugal relation that is between man and wife unto Christ and his church. What the apostle had spoken of the one, he would have understood of the other. Wherein consists, then, the union between man and wife, which is chosen by God himself to represent the union between Christ and his church? The Holy Ghost informs us, Gen. ii. 24, "They shall be no more twain, but one flesh." This is their union,—they shall be no more twain, but (in all mutual care, respect, tenderness, and love) one flesh. The rise of this you have, verse 23, because of the bone and flesh of Adam was Eve his helper made. Hence are they said to be "one flesh." Wherein, then, in answer to this, is the union between Christ and his church? The same apostle tells us, 1 Cor. vi. 16, 17, "He," saith he, "that is joined to an harlot is one body, but he that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit." As they are one flesh, so these are one spirit; and as they are one flesh, because the one was made out of the other, so these are one spirit, because the Spirit which is in Christ, by dwelling in them, makes them his members, which is their union.

(3.) Of a *tree*,—an olive, a vine, and its boughs and branches. "I am the vine," saith Christ, "ye are the branches," John xv. 5; "abide in me, and I in you." As tree and branches, they have an abiding union one with another. Wherein this consists the apostle sets out under the example of an olive and his boughs, Rom. xi. 16, 17. It is in this, that the branches and boughs being ingrafted into the tree, they partake of the very same juice and fatness with the root and tree, being nourished thereby. There is the same fructifying, fattening virtue in the one as the other; only with this

difference, in the root and tree it is *originally*, in the boughs by *communication*. And this also is chosen to set out the union of Christ and his. Both he and they are partakers of the same fruit-bearing Spirit; he that dwells in them dwells in him also: only, it is in him, as to them, originally; in them by communication from him. Take a scion, a graft, a plant, fix it to the tree with all the art you can, and bind it on as close as possible, yet it is not united to the tree until the sap that is in the tree be communicated to it; which communication states the union. Let a man be bound to Christ by all the bonds of profession imaginable, yet unless the sap that is in him, the holy and blessed Spirit, be also communicated to him, there is no union between them. And this is the first thing that doth issue and depend upon the indwelling of the Spirit in believers, even union with Christ, which is a demonstration of it *a posteriori*.

2. The Spirit as indwelling gives us *life* and *quickening*. "God quickens our mortal bodies (or us in them) by his Spirit that dwelleth in us," Rom. viii. 11, by which Spirit Christ also was raised from the dead; and therefore, the apostle mentioning in another place the beginning and carrying on of faith in us, he saith it is wrought "according to the exceeding greatness of the power of God, which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead," Eph. i. 19, 20. Now, in this quickening there are two things:—(1.) The *actus primus*, or the life itself bestowed; (2.) The *operations* of that life in them on whom it is bestowed.

(1.) For the first, I shall not positively determine what it is, nor wherein it doth consist. This is clear, that by nature "we are dead in trespasses and sins;" that in our quickening we have a new spiritual life communicated to us, and that from Christ, in whom it is treasured up for that purpose. But what this life is, it doth not fully appear whilst we are here below. All actual graces confessedly flow from it, and are distinct from it, as the operations of it. I say, in this sense they flow from it confessedly, as suitable actings are from habits, though to the actual exercise of any grace within, new help and assistance is necessary, in that continual dependence are we upon the fountain. Whether it consists in that which is called "habitual grace," or the gracious suitableness and disposition of the soul unto spiritual operations, may be doubted. The apostle tells us Christ is our life: Col. iii. 4, "When Christ, who is our life, shall appear;" and Gal. ii. 20, "Christ liveth in me." Christ liveth in believers by his Spirit, as hath been declared. "Christ dwelleth in you," and, "His Spirit dwelleth in you," are expressions of the same import and signification. But,—

(2.) God by his Spirit "worketh in us both to will and to do of his own good pleasure." All vital actions are from him. It may be said of graces and gracious operations as well as gifts, "All these

worketh in us that one and the self-same Spirit, dividing to every one as he will." But this is not now to be insisted on.

3. The Spirit as indwelling gives *guidance and direction* to them in whom he is as to the way wherein they ought to walk: Rom. viii. 14, "As many as are led by the Spirit of God." The Spirit leads them in whom it is. And verse 1, they are said to "walk after the Spirit." Now, there is a twofold leading, guidance, or direction:— (1.) *Moral* and *extrinsical*, the leading of a rule; (2.) *Internal* and *efficient*, the leading of a principle.

Of these, the one *lays forth the way*, the other *directs and carries along in it*. The first is the Word, giving us the direction of a way, of a rule; the latter is the Spirit, effectually guiding and leading us in all the paths thereof. Without this the other's direction will be of no saving use; it may be "line upon line, precept upon precept," yet men go backward and are ensnared. David, notwithstanding the rule of the Word, yea the Spirit of prophecy, for the inditing of more of the mind of God for the use of the church, when moved thereunto, yet in one psalm cries out four times, "Oh! give me understanding, that I may learn thy commandments," concluding that hence would be his life, that therein it lay: "Oh! give me," saith he, "understanding, and I shall live," Ps. cxix. 144. So Paul bidding Timothy consider the word of the Scripture, that he might know whence it is that this will be of use unto him, he adds, "The Lord give thee understanding in all things," 2 Tim. ii. 7. How this understanding is given the same apostle informs us, Eph. i. 17, 18, "The God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, give unto you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him: the eyes of your understanding being" thereby "enlightened;" 1 Cor. ii. 11, 12. It is the "Spirit of wisdom and revelation," the Holy Spirit of God, from whom is all spiritual wisdom, and all revelation of the will of God, who being given unto us by the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, and our God in him, "enlightens our understanding, that we may know," etc. And on this account is the Son of God said to "come and give us an understanding to know him that is true," that is, himself by his Spirit, 1 John v. 20.

Now, there be two ways whereby the Spirit gives us guidance to walk according to the rule of the word:—

(1.) By giving us "the knowledge of the will of God, in all wisdom and spiritual understanding," Col. i. 9, carrying us on "unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the acknowledgment of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ," chap. ii. 2. This is that spiritual, habitual, saving illumination, which he gives to the souls of them to whom he is given: "He who commanded light to shine out of darkness, by him shineth into their hearts, to give them the light of the knowledge of his glory in the face of Jesus Christ,"

2 Cor. iv. 6. This is elsewhere termed "translating from darkness to light, opening blind eyes, giving light to them that are in darkness, freeing us from the condition of natural men, who discern not the things that are of God."[1] This the apostle makes it his design to clear up and manifest, 1 Cor. ii. He tells you the things of the gospel are "the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory," verse 7; and then proves that an acquaintance herewith is not to be attained by any natural means or abilities whatsoever, verse 9, "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him;" and thence, unto the end of the chapter, variously manifests how this is given to believers and wrought in them by the Spirit alone, from whom it is that they know the mind of Christ. "But," saith he, "God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, even the deep things of God. For who knoweth the things of a man but the spirit of a man? and who knoweth the things of God but the Spirit of God? And we have received the spirit, not of this world, but the Spirit which is of God; that we may know the things which are freely given us of God."

The word is as the way whereby we go; yea, as an external light, as "a lamp unto our feet, and a light unto our path," Ps. cxix. 105; yea, as the sun in the firmament, sending forth its beams of light abundantly. But what will this profit if a man have no eyes in his head? There must not only be light in the object and in the medium, but in the subject, in our hearts and minds; and this is of the operation of the Spirit of light and truth given to us, as the apostle tells us, 2 Cor. iii. 18, "We all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, as by the Spirit of the Lord."

This is the first way whereby the Holy Spirit dwelling in us gives guidance and direction. Fundamentally, habitually, he enlightens our minds, give us eyes, understandings, shines into us, translates us from darkness into marvellous light, whereby alone we are able to see our way, to know our paths, and to discern the things of God: without this men are "blind, and cannot see afar off," 2 Pet. i. 9.

There are three things which men either have or may be made partakers of without this,—this communication of light by the indwelling Spirit:—

[1.] They have the *subject* of knowledge, a natural faculty of understanding. Their minds remain; though depraved, destroyed, perverted, yea, so far that "their eye and the light that is in them is darkness," yet the faculty remains still, Matt. vi. 23.

[2.] They may have the *object*, or truth revealed in the word. This

[1] Col. i. 13; 1 Pet. ii. 9; Eph. v. 8; Luke iv. 18; 1 Cor. ii. 14.

is common to all that are made partakers of the good word of God; that is, to whom it is preached and delivered, as it is to many whom "it doth not profit, not being mixed with faith," Heb. iv. 2.

[3.] The ways and means of communicating the truth so revealed to their minds or understandings, which is the *literal, grammatical, logical* delivery of the things contained in the Scriptures, as held out to their minds and apprehensions in their meditation on them. And this means of conveyance of the sense of the Scripture is plain, obvious, and clear, in all necessary truths.

A concurrence of these three will afford and yield them that have it, upon their diligence and inquiry, a disciplinary knowledge of the literal sense of Scripture, as they have of other things. By this means the light shines φαίνει, sends out some beams of light into their dark minds; "but the darkness comprehends it not," receives not the light in a spiritual manner, John i. 5. There is, notwithstanding all this, still wanting the work of the Spirit, before mentioned, creating and implanting in and upon their understandings and minds that light and power of discerning spiritual things which before we insisted on. This the Scripture sometimes calls the "opening of the understanding," Luke xxiv. 45; sometimes the "giving an understanding" itself, 2 Tim. ii. 7, 1 John v. 20; sometimes "light in the Lord," Eph. v. 8. Notwithstanding all the advantages formerly spoken of, without this men are still "natural men and darkness, not comprehending, not receiving the things of God,"—that is, not spiritually; for so the apostle adds, "Because they are spiritually discerned," 1 Cor. ii. 14. Receiving spiritual things by mere natural mediums, they become "foolishness" unto them. This is the first thing that the Spirit dwelling in us doth towards guidance and direction: he gives a new light and understanding, whereby, in general, we are enabled to "discern, comprehend, and receive spiritual things."

(2.) In particular, he guides and leads men to the embracing particular truths, and to the walking in and up unto them. Christ promised to give him to us for this end,—namely, to lead us into all truth: John xvi. 13, "He will guide you into all truth." There is more required to the receiving, entertaining, embracing, a particular truth, and rejecting of what is contrary unto it, than a habitual illumination. This also is the work of the Spirit that dwells in us; he works this also in our minds and hearts. Therefore the apostle secures his "little children" that they shall be led into truth and preserved from seduction on this account: 1 John ii. 20, "Ye have an unction from the Holy One" (or, ye have received the Spirit from the Lord Jesus), "and ye shall know all things." Why so? Because it is his work to guide and lead you into all the things whereof I am speaking. And more fully, verse 27, "The anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any

man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him." It is received as promised; it doth abide, as the Spirit is said to do; and it teacheth, which is the proper work of the Spirit in an eminent manner.

Now, this guidance of believers by the Spirit, as to the particular truths and actings, consists in his putting forth of a twofold act of light and power:—

[1.] Of *light;* and that also is twofold:—

1*st.* Of *beauty,* as to the things to be received or done. He represents them to the soul as excellent, comely, desirable, and glorious, leading us on in the receiving of truth "from glory to glory," 2 Cor. iii. 18. He puts upon every truth a new glory, making and rendering it desirable to the soul; without which it cannot be closed withal, as not discovering either suitableness or proportion unto the minds and hearts of men. And,—

2*dly. By some actual elevation of the mind and understanding* to go forth unto and receive into itself the truth as represented to it: by both of them sending forth light and truth, Ps. xliii. 3; blowing off the clouds, and raising up the day-star that rises in our hearts, 2 Pet. ii. 19.

[2.] Of *power:* Isa. xxxv. 5, 6, the breaking forth of streams makes not only the blind to see but the lame to leap. Strength comes as well as light, by the pouring out of the Spirit on us; strength for the receiving and practice of all his gracious discoveries to us.

He leads us, not only in general, implanting a saving light in the mind, whereby it is disposed and enabled to discern spiritual things in a spiritual manner, but also as to particular truths, rendering them glorious and desirable. Opening the mind and understanding by new beams of light, he leads the soul irresistibly unto the receiving of the truths revealed; which is the second thing we have by him.

I shall only observe, for a close of this, one or two consequences of the weight of this twofold operation of the indwelling of Christ:—

[1.] From the want of the first, or his creating a new light in the minds of men, it is that so many labour in the fire for an acquaintance with the things of God; it is, I say, a consequence of it, as darkness is of absence of the sun. Many we see, after sundry years spent in considerable labours and diligence, reading of many books, with a contribution of assistance from other useful arts and sciences, in the issue of all their endeavours do wax "vain in their imaginations, having their foolish hearts darkened; professing themselves wise, they become fools;" being so far from any sap and savour that they have not the leaves of ability in things divine, Rom. i. 21, 22. Others, indeed, make some progress in a disciplinary knowledge of the doctrines

of the Scriptures, and can accurately reason and distinguish about them, according to the forms wherein they have been exercised, and that to a great height of conviction in their own spirits, and permanency in the profession they have taken up. But yet all this while they abide without any effectual power of the truth conforming and framing their spirits unto the likeness and mould thereof, Rom. vi. 17. They do but "see men walking like trees." Some shines of the light break in upon them, which rather amaze than guide them; they "comprehend it not." They see spiritual things in a natural light, and presently forget what manner of things they were, and in the species wherein they are retained they are "foolishness," 1 Cor. ii. 12–14.

[2.] From the want of the latter it is that we ourselves are so slow in receiving some parts of truth, and do find it so difficult to convince others of some other parts of it, which to us are written with the beams of the sun. Unless the truth itself be rendered a glory to the understanding, and the mind be actually enlightened as to the truth represented, it is not to be received in a spiritual manner. Those who know at all what the truth is, "as the truth is in Jesus," will not take it up upon any other more common account. Sometimes in dealing with godly persons to convince them of a truth, we are ready to admire at their stupidity or perverseness, that they will not receive that which shines in with so broad a light upon our spirits. The truth is, until the Holy Spirit sends forth the light and power mentioned, it is impossible that their minds and hearts should rest and acquiesce in any truth whatever. But,—

4. From this indwelling of the Spirit we have *supportment*. Our hearts are very ready to sink and fail under our trials; indeed, a little thing will cause us so to do: flesh, and heart, and all that is within us, are soon ready to fail, Ps. lxxiii. 26. Whence is it that we do not sink into the deeps? that we have so many and so sweet and gracious recoveries, when we are ready to be swallowed up? The Spirit that dwells in us gives us supportment. Thus it was with David, Ps. li. 12. He was ready to be overwhelmed under a sense of the guilt of that great sin which God then sorely charged upon his conscience, and cries out like a man ready to sink under water, "O uphold me with thy free Spirit;"—"If that do not support me, I shall perish." So Rom. viii. 26, the Spirit helpeth, bears up that infirmity which is ready to make us go double. How often should we be overborne with our burdens, did not the Spirit put under his power to bear them and to support us! Thus Paul assures himself that he shall be carried through all his trials by the help supplied to him by the Spirit, Phil. i. 19.

There are two special ways whereby the Spirit communicates supportment unto the saints when they are ready to sink, and that upon two accounts, first, of consolation, and then of strength:—

(1.) The first he doth by bringing to mind the things that Jesus Christ hath left in store for their supportment. Our Saviour Christ informing his disciples how they should be upheld in their tribulations, tells them that the Comforter, which should dwell with them and be in them, John xiv. 16, 17, should bring to remembrance what he had told them, verse 26. Christ had said many things, things gracious and heavenly, to his disciples; he had given them many rich and precious promises to uphold their hearts in their greatest perplexities;—but knowing full well how ready they were to forget and to let slip the things that were spoken,[1] and how coldly his promises would come in to their assistance, when retained only in their natural faculties, and made use of by their own strength, to obviate these evils, he tells them that this work he committeth to the charge of another, who will do it to the purpose. "When ye are ready to drive away, the Comforter," saith he, "who is in you, he shall bring to remembrance and apply to your souls the things that I have spoken, the promises that I have made; which will then be unto you as life from the dead." And this he doth every day. How often, when the spirits of the saints are ready to faint within them, when straits and perplexities are round about them, that they know not what to do, nor whither to apply themselves for help or supportment, doth the Spirit that dwelleth in them bring to mind some seasonable, suitable promise of Christ, that bears them up quite above their difficulties and distractions, opening such a new spring of life and consolation to their souls as that they who but now stooped, yea were almost bowed to the ground, do stand upright, and feel no weight or burden at all! Oftentimes they go for water to the well, and are not able to draw; or, if it be poured out upon them, it comes like rain on a stick that is fully dry. They seek to promises for refreshment, and find no more savour in them than in the white of an egg; but when the same promises are brought to remembrance by the Spirit the Comforter, who is with them and in them, how full of life and power are they!

(2.) As this he doth to support believers in respect of consolation, so as to the communication of real strength, he stirs up those graces in them that are strengthening and supporting. The graces of the Spirit are indeed, all of them, supporting and upholding. If the saints fall and sink at any time, in any duty, under any trial, it is because their graces are decayed, and do draw back as to the exercise of them. "If thou faint in the day of adversity," it is not because thy adversaries are great or strong, but because "thy strength is small," Prov. xxiv. 10. All our fainting is from the weakness of our strength; faith, waiting, patience, are small. When David's faith and patience began to sink and draw back, he cried, "'All men are liars;'

[1] Heb. ii. 1.

I shall perish one day by the hand of mine enemies," Ps. cxvi. 11, 1 Sam. xxvii. 1. When faith is but little, and grace but weak, we shall be forced, if the wind do but begin to blow, to cry out, "Save, Lord, or we sink and perish." Let a temptation, a lust, a corruption, lay any grace asleep, and the strongest saint will quickly become like Samson with his hair cut and the Philistines about him: he may think to do great matters, but at the first trial he is made a scorn to his enemies. Peter thought it was the greatness of the wind and waves that terrified him; but our Saviour tells him it was the weakness of his faith that betrayed him, Matt. xiv. 30, 31. For relief in this condition, the Spirit that dwells in the saints stirs up, enlivens, and actuates, all his graces in them, that may support and strengthen them in their duties and under their tribulations. Rom. v., Paul runs up the influence of grace into the saints' supportment unto this fountain: Verse 3, "We glory in tribulations." This is as high a pitch as can be attained. To be patient under tribulation is no small victory; to glory in it a most eminent triumph, a conformity to Christ, who in his cross triumphed over all his opposers. "We are not only patient under tribulations, and have strength to bear them, but," saith the apostle, "we glory and rejoice in them, as things very welcome to us." How comes this about? Saith he, "Tribulation worketh patience" (that is, it sets it at work, for tribulation in itself will never work or beget patience in us); "and patience, experience; and experience, hope: and hope maketh not ashamed." It is from hence that these graces, patience, experience, hope, being set on work, do bear up and support our souls, and raise them to such a height under their pressures that we have great cause of rejoicing in them all. Yea, but whence is this? do these graces readily come forth and exert themselves with an efficacy suitable to this triumphing frame? The ground and spring of all is discovered, verse 5; it is, "Because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us." From this fountain do all these fresh streams flow. The Spirit that is given us, that "sheds abroad the love of God in our hearts," and thereby sets all our graces on work, he oils the wheels of the soul's obedience, when we neither know what to do nor how to perform what we know.

5. This indwelling Spirit gives *restraint*. Restraining grace doth mainly consist in moral persuasion, from the causes, circumstances, and ends of things. When a man is dissuaded from sin, upon considerations taken from any such head or place as is apt to prevail with him, that persuasion, so applied and intended of God for that end, is unto him *restraining grace*. By this means doth the Lord keep within bounds the most of the sons of men, notwithstanding all their violent and impetuous lusts. Hell, shame, bitterness, disappointment, on the one hand, credit, repute, quietness of conscience,

and the like, on the other, bind them to their good behaviour. God through these things drops an awe upon their spirits, binding them up from running out unto that compass of excess and riot in sinning which otherwise their lusts would carry them unto. This is not his way of dealing with the saints; he "puts his law in their inward parts, and writes it in their hearts," Jer. xxxi. 33, that they may not depart from him, making them a willing people through his own power, Ps. cx. 3. By his effectually restraining grace he carries them out kindly, cheerfully, willingly, to do his whole will, "working in them both to will and to do of his good pleasure." Yet, notwithstanding all this, oftentimes, through the strength of temptation, the subtlety of Satan, and his readiness to improve all advantages to the utmost, and the treachery and deceitfulness of indwelling sin and corruption, they are carried beyond the bounds and lines of that principle or law of life and love whereby they are led. What now doth the Lord do? They are ready to run quite out of the pasture of Christ; doth he then let them go, and give them up to themselves? Nay; but he sets a hedge about them, that they shall not find their way; he leads them as the "wild ass in her month," that they may be found; he puts a restraint upon their spirits, by setting home some sad considerations of the evil of their hearts and ways, whither they are going, what they are doing, and what shall be the issue of their walking so loosely, even in this life,—what shame, what scandal, what dishonour to themselves, their profession, the gospel, their brethren, it would prove; and so hampers them, quiets their spirits, and gently brings them again under obedience unto that principle of love that is in them, and to the Spirit of grace (whose yoke they were casting off) whereby they are led. Many times, then, even the saints of God are kept from sins, especially outward, actual sins, upon such outward motives, reasonings, and considerations as other men are. Peter was broken loose, and running down hill apace, denying and forswearing his Master; Christ puts a restraint upon his spirit by a look towards him. This minds him of his folly, unkindness, his former rash confidence and engagement to die with his Master, and sets him on such considerations as stirred up the principle of grace in him to take its place and rule again; and, in obedience thereunto, he not only desists from any farther denial, but faith, repentance, love, all exerting themselves, he "went out, and wept bitterly." It is so frequently with the saints of God, though in lesser evils. By neglect and omission of duty, or inclination to evil, and closing with temptations, they break out of the pure and perfect rule and guidance of the Spirit, whereby they ought to be led. Instantly some considerations or other are pressed in upon their spirits, taken, perhaps, from outward things, which recover them to that obediential frame from whence, through vio-

lence of corruption and temptation, they had broken; like [as] a hawk sitting on a man's hand, eating her meat in quietness, is suddenly, by the original wildness of her nature, carried out to an attempt of flying away with speed, but is checked by the string at her heels, upon which she returns to her meat again. We have an innate wildness in us, provoking and stirring us up to run from God. Were we not recovered by some clog fastened on us for our restraint, we should often run into the most desperate paths. And this restraint, I say, is from the indwelling Spirit. He stirs up one thing or other to smite the heart and conscience, when it is under the power of any temptation to sin and folly. So it was with David in the attempt he made upon Saul, when he cut off the lap of his garment. Temptation and opportunity had almost turned him loose from under the power of faith, waiting, and dependence on God, wherein lay the general frame of his spirit; he is recovered to it by a blow upon the heart, from some dismal consideration of the issue and scandal of that which he was about.

6. We have hereby also the *renewal, daily renewal, of sanctifying grace.* Inherent grace is a thing in its own nature apt to decay and die; it is compared to things ready to die: Rev. iii. 2, "Strengthen the things that remain," saith Christ to the church of Sardis, "that are ready to die." It is a thing that may wither and decline from its vigour, and the soul may thereby be betrayed into manifold weaknesses and backslidings. It is not merely from the nature of the trees in the garden of God that their fruit fails not nor their leaves wither, but from their "planting by the rivers of water," Ps. i. 3. Hence are the sicknesses, weaknesses, and decays of the spirit, mentioned in the Scripture. Should he who had the richest stock of any living be left to spend of it without new supplies, he would quickly be a bankrupt. This also is prevented by the indwelling Spirit. He is the fatness of the olive, that is communicated to the branches continually, to keep them fruitful and flourishing. He is that golden oil which passes through the branches and empties itself in the fruitfulness of the church. He continually fills our lamps with new oil, and puts new vigour into our spirits: Ps. xcii. 10, "My horn shalt thou exalt like the horn of an unicorn: I shall be anointed with fresh oil," or renewed supplies of the Spirit. And this, Ps. ciii. 5, is called a renewing of youth like the eagle's,—a recovery of former strength and vigour, new power and ability for new duties and performances. And how comes that about? Saith the psalmist, "It is by God's satisfying my mouth with good things." He satisfied his mouth with good things, or answered his prayers. What these good things are which the saints pray for, and wherewith their mouths are satisfied, our Saviour tells us: "Your Father," saith he, "knoweth how to give good things to them that ask them of him;"

which expressing in another place, he saith, "Your Father will give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him of him." He is given us, and he renews our strength as the eagle's, making our souls, which were ready to languish, prompt, ready, cheerful, strong in the ways of God. To this purpose is that prayer of the spouse, Cant. iv. 16, "Awake, O north wind; and come, thou south; and blow upon my garden, that the savour of my spices may flow out. Let my Beloved come into his garden, that he may eat of the fruit of his precious things." She is sensible of the withering of her spices, the decays of her graces, and her disability thereupon to give any suitable entertainment unto Jesus Christ. Hence is her earnestness for new breathings and operations of the Spirit of grace, to renew, and revive, and set on work again, her graces in her, which without it could not be done. All graces are the fruits of the Spirit: Gal. v. 22, 23, "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance." If the root do not communicate fresh juice and sap continually, the fruit will quickly wither. Were there not a continual communication of new life and freshness unto our graces from the indwelling Spirit, we should soon be poor withered branches. This our Saviour tells us, John xv. 4, 5, "Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for severed from me ye can do nothing." Our abiding in Christ and his in us, is, as was declared, by the indwelling of the same Spirit in him and us. Hence, saith Christ, have ye all your fruit-bearing virtue. And unless that be continued to us, we shall wither and consume to nothing. David, in his spiritually-declined condition, entangled under the power and guilt of sin, cries out for the continuance of the Spirit and the restoring him, as to those ends and purposes in reference whereunto he was departed from him, Ps. li. 11, 12. This the apostle prays earnestly that the Ephesians may receive: Chap. iii. 14, 16, 17, "I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, that he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man; that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love," etc. The inner man is the same with the new creature, the new principle of grace in the heart. This is apt to be sick, to faint, and decay. The apostle prays that it might be strengthened. How is this to be done? how is it to be renewed, increased, enlivened? It is, saith he, by the mighty power of the Spirit; and he then gives you particular instances in the graces which flourish and spring up effectually upon that strengthening they receive by the might and power of the Spirit, as of faith,

love, knowledge, and assurance, the increasing and establishing of all which are ascribed there unto him. He who bestows these graces on us and works them in us doth also carry them on unto perfection. Were it not for our inflowings from that spring, our cisterns would quickly be dry. Therefore our Saviour tells us that he, the Spirit, is unto believers as rivers of living water flowing out of their bowels, John vii. 38, 39; as a never-failing fountain, that continually puts forth living waters of grace in us.

This may a little farther be considered and insisted on, being directly to our main purpose in hand. It is true, indeed, it doth more properly belong unto that which I have assigned for the second part of this treatise, concerning the ground or principle of the saints' abiding with God for ever; but falling in conveniently in this order, I shall farther press it from John iv. 14: "Whosoever," saith our Saviour, "shall drink of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst: but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life."

The occasion of these words is known; they are part of our Saviour's colloquy with the poor Samaritan harlot. Having told her that he could give her another manner of water, and infinitely better than that which she drew out of Jacob's well, (for which the poor creature did almost contemn him, and asked him whence he had that water whereof he spake, how he came by it, or what he made of himself,—did he think himself a better man than Jacob, who drank of that well which she was drawing water out of?) to convince her of the truth and reality of his promise, he compares the water that he would and could give with that which she drew out of the well, especially as to one eminent effect, wherein the water of his promise did infinitely surmount that which she so magnified: for, verse 13, he tells her, [as] for that water in the well, though it allayed thirst for a season, yet within a little while she would thirst again, and must come thither to draw; "But," saith he, "whosoever shall drink of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst." And this he proveth from the condition of the water he giveth: "It is a well of water; not a draught, not a pitcherful, as that thou carriest away, but it is a fountain, a well." "Yea, perhaps in itself it is so, a fountain or well, but he that drinks of it, he hath but one draught of that water." "Nay," saith Christ, "it shall become a well in him; not a well whereunto he may go, but a well that he shall carry about in him. He that hath a continual spring of living water in him shall doubtless have no occasion of fainting for thirst any more." This our Saviour amplifies and clears up unto her, from the nature and energy of this well of water, "It springeth up into everlasting life;" in these last words instructing the poor sinful creature in the use of the parable that he had used with her. Having taken an occasion to speak to

her of *heavenly things* from the nature of the employment that she was engaged in at present, two or three things may be observed from the words, to give light into their tendency to the confirmation of the truth we have under consideration:—

(1.) The water here promised by our Saviour is the holy and blessed Spirit; this needs no labour to demonstrate. The Spirit himself so interprets it, John vii. 38, 39, "He that believeth on me," saith our Saviour, "as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive." That which in one place he calleth "a well of water springing up into everlasting life in us," is in the other, in equivalent terms, called "rivers of living water flowing out of our bellies;" and the Holy Ghost tells us that he himself, the blessed Spirit, is signified by that expression. Neither is there any thing bestowed on us that can be compared to a spring of water rising up, increasing, and flowing out abundantly, upon its own account, but the Spirit only. It is only the Spirit that is a fountain of refreshment, from whence all grace doth abundantly flow. It is, I say, the Spirit whereof we have been speaking, who is procured for us and bestowed upon us by Jesus Christ, which, as an everlasting fountain, continually supplies us with refreshing streams of grace, and fills us anew therewith, when the channels thereof in our souls are ready to become dry. And,—

(2.) The state and condition of them on whom this living water is bestowed, in reference thereunto, is described. Saith our Saviour, "He that hath this Spirit of grace, this well of living water, shall never thirst." It is most emphatically expressed by two negatives, and an exegetical additional term for weight and certainty: Οὐ μὴ διψήσῃ, "He shall never thirst to eternity;" or, as it is expressed, John vi. 35, "He shall never thirst at any time." There is a twofold thirst:—

[1.] There is a thirst *totalis indigentiæ*, of a whole and entire want of that men thirst after; and this is the thirst that returns upon men in their natural lives. After they have allayed it once with natural water, they thirst again; and their want of water returns as entire and full as if they had never drank in their lives. Such a spiritual thirst doth God ascribe to wicked men, Isa. lxv. 13, "My servants shall eat, but ye shall be hungry; my servants shall drink, but ye shall be thirsty." Their hunger and thirst is the total want of grace; not that they do desire it, but that they have it not. And this thirst of total want of grace is that that never shall nor can befall them who have received the Spirit of grace as a well of water in them. They can never so thirst as to be returned again into the condition wherein they were before they drank of that Spirit.

[2.] There is also a thirst of desire and complacency of the good

things thirsted after. In this sense they are pronounced blessed who "hunger and thirst after righteousness," Matt. v. 6. And Peter instructs us to grow in this thirst more and more: 1 Pet. ii. 2, "As new-born babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby." The enjoyment of the Spirit doth not take away this thirst, but begin it and increase it; and by this thirst, as one means, are we preserved from that total want and indigency, which shall never again befall us.

(3.) Our Saviour gives the reason why and whence it is that they who drink of this water, are made partakers of his Spirit, shall thirst no more, or never be brought to the condition of total want of grace, which they were in before they received him: "Because the water which I shall give them," saith he, "the Spirit which I shall bestow upon them, dwelleth in them," as we have showed, "shall be a well of water," a fountain of grace, "springing up in them to everlasting life," continuing and perpetuating the grace communicated, unto the full fruition of God in glory. There are, among others, three eminent things in this reason to confirm us in the faith of the former assertion:—

[1.] The condition or nature of the Spirit in believers. He is a "well, a fountain, a spring," that never can nor will be dry to eternity.

[2.] The constant *supplies of grace* that this Spirit affords them in whom he is; he is water always "springing up." So that to say he will refresh saints and believers with his grace, provided that they turn not profligately wicked, is openly to contradict our Saviour Christ, with as direct opposition to the design in the words, as can be imagined. This springing up of grace, which from him is had and received, which is his work in us, is that whereunto this profligate wickedness is opposed; and whilst that is, this cannot be. There is an everlasting inconsistency between profligate wickedness and a never-failing spring of grace.

[3.] His *permanency* in this work, and efficacy by it. This living water springs up to "everlasting life." He ceases not until our spiritual life be consummated in eternity.

This, then, is the sum of this promise of our Saviour: He gives his Holy Spirit to his; who lives in them, and gives them such continual supplies of grace, that they shall never come to a total want of it, as they do of elementary water who have once drunk thereof. And from this spring doth this argument flow: They on whom the Spirit is bestowed to abide with them for ever, and to whom he constantly yields such supplies of grace as that they shall never be reduced to a total want for ever, they shall certainly and infallibly persevere; but that this is the condition of all that come to Christ by believing, or that Christ hath promised that so it shall be with them, is clear from his own testimony now insisted on: *ergo.*

Unto this argument from the promise of our Saviour, Mr Goodwin endeavours an answer, chap. xi. sect. 10–12, pp. 232, 233, and in the preface of it tells us, "That this scripture doth but face (if so much) the business in hand." To "face" it, I suppose, is to appear at first view in its defence; and this, indeed, cannot well or colourably be denied, the words of it punctually expressing the very truth we intend to prove thereby; and this, notwithstanding the allaying qualification, "If so much," must needs somewhat prejudice the ensuing evasions. But we are yet farther confident that upon the more diligent and strict examination, it will be found to speak to the very heart and soul of the business in hand. And the consideration of his reasons to the contrary doth seem only to give us farther light herein and assurance hereof. He says, then,—

"Here is no promise made that they who once believe, how unworthily soever they shall behave themselves, shall still be preserved by God, or the Spirit of God, in believing, or that they shall be necessitated always to believe."

Ans. This is the old play still. It is not at all our intendment to produce any promise of safeguarding men in the love of God, how vile soever they may prove, but of preserving them from all such unworthiness as should render them utterly incapable thereof. And this is plainly here asserted, in the assurance given of the perpetual residence of the Spirit in them, with such continual supplies of grace from him as shall certainly preserve them from any such state or condition as is imagined. Of being necessitated to believe, I have spoken formerly. The expression is neither used by us, nor proper to the thing itself about which it is used, nor known in the Scripture as to this purpose; and therefore we justly reject it as to its signifying any thing of the way and manner whereby we are preserved by the power of God through faith unto salvation. If it denotes only the certainty and infallibility of the event, as the phrase or locution is improper, so to deny that there is a promise of our being preserved by the Spirit of God in believing is not to answer our argument, but to beg the thing in question, yea, to deny the positive assertion of the Lord Christ. But if there be not such a promise in the words, what then is in them? what do they contain? Saith he,—

"They are only a declaration and assertion made by Christ of the excellency and desirableness of that life which he comes to give unto the world, above the life of nature, which is common unto all. This, by comparing the words with those in the former verse, is evident. 'Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again; but whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him,' etc. That is, 'The best means that can be had and enjoyed to render this present life free from inconveniencies will not effect it; but whosoever shall drink, enjoy, receive, and believe, the doctrine which I shall ad-

minister unto him, shall hereby be made partaker of such a life, which shall within a short time, if men be careful in the interim to preserve it, by reason of the nature, and perfect condition, and constitution of it, be exempt from all sorrow, trouble, and inconvenience whatsoever, as being eternal.'"

Ans. [1.] That these words are only an assertion of the excellency and desirableness of that eternal life which Christ would give above the natural, that the woman sued to sustain, and that this appears from the context, is *said*, indeed, but no more. It is true, our Saviour doth divert the thoughts of the woman from the natural life, and care for provision about it, with an insinuation of a better life to be attained. But is this all he doth? or is this the intendment of the words under consideration? Doth not the main of the opposition or difference which at present he speaks unto lie in the supplies that are given for the two kinds of life whereof he speaks? The water, he tells her, which she drew from that well by which he sat, for the supply of her natural life, was such that, after her drinking of it, she should quickly return to the same condition of thirst as formerly before she drank of it; but that which he gave was such as that whoever drank of it should thirst no more, but be certainly preserved in and unto the full fruition of that life whereof it is the means and supply. The opposition is not between the lives continued, but the mean of consolation and its efficacy.

[2.] It is not the condition of the life natural, which is subject to dissolution and not capable of perfection, that is the reason why they thirst again and again that have water natural for the refreshment thereof; but it is the nature of the means itself which is supplied, that is not fitted or suited to permanency and abiding usefulness (as the water which Christ promises is), that he insists on. There is not any thing [which] leads us to suppose that it is the *imperfection* of life, and not the *condition* of the means of natural life, that is primarily intended in the instituted comparison, though the frailty and nothingness of that life also be afterward intimated in the substitution of eternal life unto the thoughts of the poor woman in the room thereof.

[3.] I say that it is not the *doctrine of Christ*, but *his Spirit* principally, that he is here said to give as water; and that this is not promised to make men partakers of eternal life if in the interim they be careful to preserve it, but to preserve them to it, and to give them that care which as a grace is needful thereunto. The plain intendment of the promise is, that by the water they drink they shall be kept and preserved in the life whereof they are made partakers, unto the fulness and perfection of it; which preservation, by the parenthesis, "If any be careful in the interim to preserve it," is directly taken away from the Spirit that Christ promiseth, and

assigned to men's own care, even in contradistinction to all the benefits which they receive by him being so bestowed on them. The difference, then, here between Jesus Christ and Mr Goodwin is this:—Christ saith, "The water that he shall give will be a well springing up to everlasting life;" Mr Goodwin, "That it is the care of men to preserve themselves that produces that effect."

[4.] The present exemption which we have by the water of Christ's giving is not from sorrow and trouble, but from thirst; that is, from what is opposed unto and is destructive of that life which he also gives, as natural thirst is unto natural life. But of this thirst and our exemption from it I have spoken before. It is not, then, the nature and condition of the life promised that he points unto, no farther than as it is coincident with the means of it here spoken of. Indeed, this means of life is our life, as to the inchoation of it here below, and its daily growing up unto perfection. But he adds, sect. 11,—

"That he doth not oppose that life, which accrues unto men by drinking that water which he gives them, unto the natural life, which they live by other means in respect of the present condition or constitution of it, or as it is enjoyed by men in this present world, is evident from hence, because he asserts it free from thirst ('Shall never thirst'). Now, we know that the saints themselves, notwithstanding that life of grace which is in them, by drinking that water that Christ hath given them, are yet subject to both kinds of thirst, as well that which is corporeal or natural as that which is spiritual; yea, the spiritual thirst unto which they are now subject, though it argues a deficiency of what they would farther have or desire to be, and in that respect is troublesome, yet is it argumentative of the goodness of their condition, Matt. v. 6."

Ans. [1.] The sum of this answer is, That the life here spoken of and promised is not that spiritual life whereof we are here made partakers, but eternal life, which is for to come, which, when any attain, they shall never fail in or fall from; but whether they may or shall attain it or no, here is nothing spoken. But here is no notice taken of the main opposition insisted on by our Saviour, between the supplies of the Spirit for life eternal, which fail not, nor suffer them to thirst to whom they are given, and the supplies of natural life by elementary water, notwithstanding which they who are made partakers thereof do in a short season come to a total want of it again. Instead of answers to our argument from this place, we meet with nothing but perpetual diversions from the whole scope and intendment of it, and at last are told that the promise signifies only that men should not want grace when they come to heaven!

[2.] To prove that there is no promise of any abiding spiritual life here, these words, "They shall never thirst," are produced. That we

shall have our life continued to the full enjoyment of it unto eternity, because such are the supplies of the Spirit bestowed on us that we shall never thirst, is the argument of our Saviour. That there is no such life promised or here to be attained, because in it we shall not thirst, is Mr Goodwin's.

[3.] It is not the intendment of our Saviour to prove that we shall not thirst because we shall have such a life, but the quite contrary, that we shall have such a life, and shall assuredly be preserved, because the supplies of the Spirit which he gives will certainly take away the thirst, which is so opposite to it as to be destructive of it.

[4.] It is true, the saints, notwithstanding this promise, are still liable to thirst, that thirst intimated Matt. v. 6, "after righteousness;" but not at all to that thirst which they have a promise here to be freed from, a thirst of a universal want of that water wherewith they are refreshed. And that their freedom from this thirst is their portion in this life, we have the testimony of Christ himself: "He that believeth on me shall never thirst," John vi. 35. And the reason of their not thirsting is the receiving and drinking in that water which Christ gives them; which, as himself says, is his Spirit, which they receive who believe on him, John vii. 38, 39. Neither is that thirst of theirs which doth remain troublesome, as is insinuated, it being a grace of the Spirit, and so quieting and composing; though they are troubled for the want of that in its fulness which they thirst after, yet their thirst is no way troublesome. That, then, which is farther added by Mr Goodwin is exceeding sophistical.

Saith he, "By the way, this spiritual thirst, which is incident unto the life which is derived from Christ, and the waters given by him unto men, as it is enjoyed and possessed by them in this present world, is (according to the purport of our Saviour's own arguing) an argument that for the present, and whilst it is obnoxious to such a thirst, it is dissolvable and may fail; for in the latter part of the said passage, he plainly implies that the eternalness of that life which springs from the drinking of this water is the reason or cause why it is exempt from thirst. Let the whole passage be read and minded, and this will clearly appear. If, then, the eternality of a life be the cause or reason why it is free from the inconveniency of thirst, evident it is that such a life which is not free from thirst is not, during this weakness or imperfection of it, eternal, or privileged against dissolution."

Ans. "That we cannot thirst under the enjoyment of the life promised proves this life not here to be enjoyed, is proved, because the eternalness of this life is the cause of its exemption from thirst;" but that the plain contrary is the intendment of the Holy Ghost, I presume is evident to all men. The reason of our preservation to eternal life, and being carried on thereunto, is apparently assigned to

those supplies of the Spirit whereby our thirst is taken away. The taking away of our thirst is the certain means of our eternal life, not a consequent of the eternity of it. All the proof of what is here asserted is, "Let the whole passage be read and minded;" in which appeal I dare acquiesce before the judgment-seat of any believer in the world, whose concernment this is. It is here, then, supposed that the eternity of the life promised is the cause of their not thirsting in whom it is, which is *beside* the text; and that they may thirst again (in the sense spoken of) who drink of that water of the Spirit which Christ gives, which is *contrary* unto it. And of these two supposals is this part of this discourse composed.

The ensuing discourse, rendering a reason upon the account whereof life may be called eternal, though it be interrupted and cut off, we shall have farther time, God assisting, to consider, and to declare its utter inconsistency with the intendment of the Holy Ghost in the expressions now before us.

He adds then, in the last place, sect. 12, "That the intendment of Christ is not that the water he gives shall always end in the issue of eternal life, but that it lies in a tendency thereunto."

Ans. Which, upon the matter, is all one as if he had said, "Christ saith, indeed, that the water which he gives shall spring up into everlasting life, and wholly remove that thirst which is comprehensive of all interveniencies that might hinder it" (as God said to Adam, "In the day that thou eatest of that fruit, thou shalt surely die"), "but he knew full well that it might otherwise come to pass;"— which, whether it doth not amount to a calling of his truth and credit in his words and promises into question, deserves, as I suppose, Mr Goodwin's serious consideration. To conclude, then, our Saviour hath assured us that the living water which he gives us shall take away such thirst, all such total want of grace and Spirit (be it to be brought about, not by this or that means, but by what means soever), as should cause us to come short of eternal life with himself; which we shall look upon as a promise of the saints' perseverance in faith, notwithstanding all the exceptions which as yet to the contrary have been produced.

Having thus long insisted on this influence of the mediation of Christ into the continuance of the love and favour of God unto believers, by procuring the Spirit for them, sending him to them, to "dwell in them and abide with them for ever" (the most effectual principle of their continuance with God), give me leave farther to confirm the truth of what hath been spoken by remarking some inferences which the Scripture holds out unto us, upon a supposition of those assertions which we have laid down concerning the indwelling of the Spirit, and the assistance which we receive from him on that account, all tending to the end and purpose we have in hand; as,—

First, Because "the Spirit dwelleth in us," we are therefore to consider and dispose of our persons as "temples of the Holy Ghost,"—that is, of this indwelling Spirit; the Scripture manifesting hereby that the doctrine of the indwelling of the Spirit is not only a truth, but a very useful truth, being made the fountain of and the enforcement unto so great a duty. He dwells in us, and we are to look well to his habitation. Our Saviour tells us, that when the evil spirit finds his dwelling "swept and garnished," Matt. xii. 44, he instantly takes possession, and brings company with him. He will not be absent from it when it is fitted for his turn. In reference to the saints and their holy Indweller, this the apostle urgeth, 1 Cor. vi. 19, 20, "Your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost, which is in you:" whence he concludes, "Ye are not your own," and therefore ought to "glorify God in your body." From hence is the strength of his argument for the avoiding of all uncleanness: Verses 16–19, "Know ye not that he which is joined to an harlot is one body? He that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit. Flee fornication. Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost?" On this account, also, doth he press to universal holiness: 1 Cor. iii. 16, 17, "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are." In verses 12–15, the apostle discovers the fruitlessness of building "hay and stubble," light and unsound doctrines or practices, upon the foundation of faith in Jesus Christ once laid, and tells us that all such things shall burn and suffer loss, and put the contrivers and workers of them to no small difficulty in escaping, like men when the garments they are clothed withal are on fire about them. On the account of this sad event of foolish and careless walking, he presses, verse 16, as was said, earnestly to universal holiness, laying down as the great motive thereunto that which we have insisted on, namely, the indwelling of the Holy Spirit in us: "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God?"—"The temple wherein God of old did dwell was built with hewn stone and cedar-wood, and overlaid with pure gold; and will ye now, who are the spiritual temple of God, build up your souls with hay and stubble?" which he furthers by that dreadful commination taken from the zeal of God for the purity of his temple. So that on each hand he doth press to the universal close keeping of our hearts in all holiness and purity, because of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. And, indeed, wherever we are said to be temples of God, or a habitation for him, as it still relates to this cause of the expression which we now insist upon, so there is ever some intimation of holiness to be pursued on that account: Eph. ii. 21, 22, "In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: in

whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit." Being made "an habitation of God" by the Spirit's indwelling in us, we grow up, or thrive in grace, into a holy temple to the Lord, to be a more complete and well-furnished habitation for him.

This, then, is that which I say: The truth of what hath formerly been spoken concerning the manner of the Spirit's abode with us, being procured for us by Jesus Christ, is farther cleared by this inference that the Scripture makes thereof. The saints are exhorted with all diligence to keep themselves a fit habitation for him, that they may not be unclean and defiled lodgings for the Spirit of purity and holiness. This is, and this is to be, their daily labour and endeavour, that vain thoughts, unruly passions, corrupt lusts, may not take up any room in their bosom; that they put not such unwelcome and unsavoury inmates upon the Spirit of grace; that sin may not dwell where God dwells. On this ground they may plead with their own souls, and say, "Hath the Lord chosen my poor heart for his habitation? Hath he said, 'I delight in it, and there will I dwell for ever?' Hath he forsaken that goodly and stately material temple whereunto he gave his especial presence of old, to take up his abode in a far more eminent way in a poor sinful soul? Doth that Holy Spirit which dwells in Jesus Christ, who was 'holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners,' who 'did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth,' dwell also in me, that am in and of myself wholly corrupted and defiled? And shall I be so foolish, so unthankful, as willingly to defile the habitation which he hath chosen? Shall I suffer vain thoughts, foolish lusts, distempered affections, worldly aims, to put in themselves upon him there? He is a Spirit of *grace;* can he bear a graceless *corruption* to be cherished in his dwelling? He is a Spirit of *holiness;* and shall I harbour in his lodging a frame of *worldliness?* He is a Spirit of *joy* and *consolation;* and shall I fill my bosom with foolish *fears* and devouring *cares?* Would not this be a grief unto him? would it not provoke the eyes of his glory? Can he bear it, that when he is with me, before his face, in his presence, I should spend my time in giving entertainment to his enemies? He is the High and the Holy One who dwells in eternity, and he hath chosen to inhabit with me also; surely I should be more brutish than any man should I be careless of his habitation. And should not this fill my soul with a holy scorn and indignation against sin? Shall I debase my soul unto any vile lust, which hath this exceeding honour, to be a habitation for the Spirit of God?" Hence, upon a view of any defilement of lust or passion, nothing troubles the saints more, nor fills them with more self-abhorrence and confusion of face, than this, that they have rendered their hearts an unsuitable habitation for the Spirit of God. This makes David, upon his sin, cry so ear-

nestly that the Spirit might not depart from him, being conscious to himself that he had exceedingly defiled his dwelling-place, Ps. li. 11. And were this consideration always fresh upon the spirits of the saints, were it more constant in their thoughts, it would keep them more upon their guard that nothing might break in to disquiet their gracious Indweller.

Secondly, Because by the Spirit we have *guidance* and *direction*, there is *wisdom* given unto us, and we are called to a holy discerning between the directions of the Spirit of grace and the delusions of the spirit of the world and the seduction of our own hearts. Christ gives this character of his sheep, that they "hear him, know his voice, and follow him," but "a stranger they will not follow," John x. 3–5. Christ speaks by his Spirit; in his guidance and direction is the voice of the Lord Jesus: "He that hath an ear to hear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches," Rev. ii. 29. What Christ saith as to the fountain of revelation, he being the great prophet of the church, that the Spirit saith as to the efficacy of the revelation unto the hearts of the saints; and as "the unction teacheth them," so do they "abide in Christ," 1 John ii. 27. The seducements of the spirit of the world, either immediately by himself or mediately by others, are the voice of strangers. Between these and the voice of the Spirit of Christ that dwells in them, the saints have a spirit of discerning. This the apostle affirms, 1 Cor. ii. 15, "He that is spiritual judgeth all things." He discerneth between things, and judgeth aright of them. He "judgeth all things;" that is, all things of that nature whereof he speaks; that is, "the things which are freely given to us of God," verse 12, for the discerning and knowledge whereof the Spirit is given them: for "the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God," verse 11. They know also the suggestions of the spirit of the world, and judge them: 2 Cor. ii. 11, "We are not ignorant of his devices." There is a twofold knowledge of the depths and devices of Satan:—one with *approbation*, to the embracing and practice of them; the other with *condemnation*, to their hatred and rejection. The first ye have mentioned Rev. ii. 24, "As many as have not known the depths of Satan, as they speak,"—their "doctrinal depths," so they call them; of them our Saviour there speaks. New doctrines were broached by Satan,—unintelligible notions. Some pretended to attain an acquaintance with them; and boasted, it seems, in them as very great and high attainments. They called them "depths," such as poor ordinary believers, that contented themselves with their low forms, could not reach unto. Saith Christ, "They are depths, as they speak;"—indeed, in themselves nothing at all, things of no solidity, weight, nor wisdom; but, as managed by Satan, they are depths indeed, such as whereby he destroys their souls. And as some approve his doctrinal depths, so some close with

his practical depths and embrace them, men that study his ways and paths, becoming desperately wicked, maliciously scoffing at religion, and despising the profession of it. But there is a knowledge also of the depths and devices of Satan leading to judging, condemning, rejecting, and watching against them. The suggestions of Satan, in their infinite variety, their rise, progress, efficacy, and advantages, their various aims and tendencies unto sin against grace, I do not now consider. But this I say, those who are "led by the Spirit of God," who have directions and guidance from him, they discern between the voice of the Spirit which dwells in them and the voice of the spirit which dwells in the world.

Now, because this is not always to be done from the manner of their speaking, the serpent counterfeiting the voice of the dove, and coming on, not only with earnestness and continuance of impulse, but with many fair and specious pretences, making good his impressions, labouring to win the understanding over to that wherewith he enticeth the affections and passions of men, they use the help of such considerations as these ensuing, to give them direction in attending to the voice of that Guide which leads them into the paths of truth, and to stop their ears to the songs of Satan, which would transform them into monsters of disobedience. Thus they know,—

1. That all the motions of the Holy Spirit, whereby they are and ought to be led, are *regular;* that he moves them to nothing but what is according to the mind of Christ, delivered in the word which he hath appointed for their rule to walk by, to no duty but what is acceptable to him, and what he hath revealed so to be. So that as believers are to try the spirits of others by that standard, whether they are of God or no, because of the subtlety of Satan, transforming himself into an angel of light, yea, into a spirit of duty, whatever immediate motions and impressions fall upon their spirits, they try them by the rule, 1 John iv. 1. It is no dishonour to the Holy Spirit, yea, it is a great honour, to have his motions within us tried by the word that he hath given for a rule without us; yea, when any preached by immediate inspiration, he commends those who examined what they delivered by that which he had given out before, Acts xvii. 11. He doth not now move in us to give a *new rule*, but a *new light* and power, as was said before. The motions of the spirit of the world are for the most part unto things wherein, though the persons with whom he deals may be in the dark, or blind, and darkened by him, yet themselves are against the rule, or beside it, in the whole or in part, in respect of some such circumstances as vitiate the whole performance.

2. They know that the commands and motions of the Spirit which dwells in them are *not grievous*, 1 John v. 3. The commands of Christ, for the matter of them, are not grievous; "his yoke is easy, his

burden is light," Matt. xi. 30. And the manner whereby we are carried out to the performance of them is not grievous: "Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty," 2 Cor. iii. 17. It carries out the soul to duty in a free, sweet, calm, ingenuous manner. The motions of the spirit of the world, even unto good things and duties (for so, for farther ends of his, it often falls out that they are), are troublesome, vexatious, perplexing, grievous, and tumultuating. Satan falls like lightning upon the soul, and comes upon the powers of it as a tempest. Hence acting in any thing upon his closing with and provoking our convictions, is called a being under the "spirit of bondage," Rom. viii. 15; which is opposed to the "Spirit of God, the Spirit of adoption, of liberty, boldness, power, and a sound mind."

3. They know that all motions of the Spirit whereby they are led are *orderly*. As is God's covenant with us, "ordered in all things," so the Spirit of God carries us out unto every duty in its own order and season; whereas we see some poor souls to be in such bondage as to be hurried up and down, in the matter of duties, at the pleasure of Satan. They must run from one to another, and commonly neglect that which they should do. When they are at prayer, then they should be at the work of their calling; and when they are at their calling, they are tempted for not laying all aside and running to prayer. Believers know that this is not from the Spirit of God, which makes "every thing beautiful in its season."

4. They know that all the workings of the Spirit of God, as they are good, so also they *tend unto a good end*. Doth that stir them up to close walking with God?—it is that God may be glorified, his graces exercised in them, their souls strengthened in obedience, and their progress in sanctification furthered. Doth it assure them of the love of God?—it is that they may be more humble, thankful, and watchful. Whereas all the compliances and combinations of Satan, and men's corrupt hearts, even when they compel to good duties, are for false, evil, and corrupt ends. Duty is pressed to pacify conscience, peace is given to make men secure, gifts are stirred up to tempt to pride; and, indeed, it may easily be observed that the devil never doth any work but he will quickly come for his wages.

By the help, I say, of these and such like considerations, the saints of God, in whom this Spirit doth dwell, are enabled to discern and know the voice of their leader and guide from the nearest resemblance of it that the spirit which is in the world doth or at any time can make show of. And this indwelling of the Spirit yields a considerable contribution of strength towards the confirmation of the main theses undertaken to be proved. Our adversaries dispute about the removal of *acquired habits;* but how *infused habits* may be cast out or expelled they have not [in] any tolerable measure been able to declare. If, moreover, it shall be evinced, as it hath been by

plentiful testimonies of Scripture, that the Holy Ghost himself dwells in believers, what way can be fixed on for his expulsion? That he cannot be removed but by his own will, *the will of him that sends him*, I suppose will easily be granted. Whilst he abides with them, they are accepted with God, and in covenant with him. That God, whilst his children are in such a state and condition, *doth take away his Spirit* from them, and give them up to the power of the devil, is incumbent on our adversaries to prove.

But to return at length from this digression. Thus far have we proceeded in manifesting, upholding, and vindicating, that influence which the oblation of Christ hath into the preservation of the saints in the love and favour of God unto the end. His intercession, being eminently effectual also to the same end and purpose, comes in the next place to be considered.

CHAPTER IX.

THE INTERCESSION OF CHRIST.

The nature of it—Its aim, not only that believers continuing so may be saved, but that they may be preserved in believing—This farther proved from the typical intercession of the Judaical high priest—The tenor of Christ's intercession, as manifested John xvii. 11, opened, and verses 12–15—The result of the argument from thence—The saints' perseverance fully confirmed—Rom. viii. 33, 34 at large explained—Mr G.'s interpretation of the place in all the parts of it confuted—Vain supposals groundlessly interserted into the apostle's discourse—What Christ intercedes for for believers farther manifested—The sum of what is assigned to the intercession of Christ by Mr G.—How far it is all from yielding the least consolation to the saints manifested—The reasons of the foregoing interpretation proposed and answered—The end assigned of the intercession of Christ answered—God works perseverance actually—A supply of means that may not be effectual not to be ascribed thereunto—Farther objections answered: Christ not the minister of sin by this doctrine—Supposals and instances upon the former interpretation disproved and rejected—A brief account of our doctrine concerning the intercession of Christ for believers, and of the true end of the act of his mediation—The close of the argument, and of the first part of this treatise.

Of the intercession of Christ, both as to the nature of its typical representation by the high priest's entering into the holy of holies every year with blood, Heb. ix. 7, and its effectual influence into the perfect, complete salvation of believers, so much hath been spoken by others, and the whole of the doctrine delivered with so much clearness, spiritualness, and strength, that I shall not need to add any thing thereunto. That Christ intercedes for the preservation of believers in the love and favour of his Father to the end is that which I intend to manifest, and which may, as I suppose, be very

easily undeniably evinced. Some few considerations will make way for the demonstration of the truth which is under consideration, or confirmation of the perseverance of saints from the intercession of Christ:—

1. The intercession of Christ being his appearance for us in the presence of God (Heb. ix. 24, he is gone into heaven ἐμφανισθῆναι τῷ προσώπῳ τοῦ Θεοῦ, to make a legal appearance for our defence before the judgment-seat of God, and by being there is our advocate, 1 John ii. 1; he is said to "be able to save us to the uttermost," Heb. vii. 25), there is certainly something or other that he puts in for in the behalf of them in whose cause he appears and sues, that so he may save them to the utmost. Now, this must be either that, being and continuing believers, they may be saved, or that they may believe and continue believers unto salvation. That the first is not the sole import and aim of the intercession of Christ may be manifested from this double consideration:—

(1.) From the nature of the thing itself. There is nothing but the establishment of the very law of the gospel ("He that believeth shall be saved,") wrapped up in this interpretation of the intercession of Christ. But this neither hath Christ any need to intercede for, it being ratified, confirmed, and declared from the beginning; neither is there, nor can there be, any opposition made against it, to shake, weaken, or disturb it in the least, it depending solely on the truth and unchangeableness of God, not being vested, by any condition whatsoever, in any other subject. (2.) Nor would this be availing to his militant church, whose preservation he aims at and intends in his intercession; for the whole of his desires may be granted him to the uttermost, and yet his whole church at any time militant perish for ever. Though not one soul should continue believing to the end, though the gates of hell should prevail against every one that names the name of Christ in the world, yet that truth, "He that believeth shall be saved," taken in the sense of our adversaries, for a promise to perseverance in believing, and not a promise to actual true believers, might stand firm for ever. To say, then, that this is the whole intercession of Christ for his church, is to say that in his whole intercession he interceded not at all for his church. He is heard in his intercession, and he may be heard to the uttermost in this, and yet his whole church be so far from being saved to the utmost as utterly to be destroyed and consumed, John xi. 42.

2. Doubtless the intercession of Christ must answer the representation of it which the apostle so much insists on, Heb. vii.–ix. Of the oblation of Christ there were many types in the Aaronical priesthood of the law; of his intercession but one principally,—namely, that solemn entrance of the high priest with blood and incense into the holiest of holies, in the great anniversary sacrifice on

the tenth day of the seventh month: on the which day, also, the great jubilee or joyful time of deliverance, typifying our deliverance by Christ, began. Hereunto is added the priesthood of Melchizedek, whereof there is mention neither of its beginning nor ending, to secure us of the continuance of our Mediator in the act of his priesthood for ever. Now, the end of the high priest's so entering into this holy place, was to carry on the work of expiation and atonement to perfection, and complete peace with God in the behalf of them for whom he offered without; and therefore the Holy Ghost saith that his entrance with blood was to "offer for himself, and for the errors of the people," Heb. ix. 7, it being but a continuation of his oblation begun without unto a complete atonement. And therefore there is no real difference between the efficacy of the death of Christ, and that of his intercession upon the actual accomplishment of it. It being, then, the complete taking away of the sins and errors of the people, as to the guilt of them, and the continuance of their peace with God, which was intended by the high priest's entrance with blood into the holiest of holies, that which answers thereunto, or the deliverance of believers from the whole guilt of sin, and their preservation in the love and favour of God, is the intendment of Christ in his intercession. Let the effects and fruits of the oblation of Christ be bounded and limited to the procuring of a new way of salvation, without purchasing for any one person whatever power and grace to walk in that way, and then exclude his intercession from any influence into the preservation of them who do enter that way therein, and perhaps indifferent men will scarce think the glory and honour of the Lord Jesus to be of any great regard with us.

3. That this is the import of Christ's intercession for believers is evident by that preface which we have thereof, John xvii., being a manifest declaration on earth of that which Christ lives in heaven to do. This was the incense wherewith he entered into the holy place, which he now prepared, and which was afterward beaten small in his agony, that it might be ready to make a sweet perfume at his entrance into heaven, as he was sprinkled with his own blood. That Christ intercedeth, and for his elect, for whom he died, that they may believe, our adversaries deny; but that he intercedes for actual believers hath not hitherto been questioned. What it is which he requests on their behalf, the tenor of that prayer of his, John xvii., will manifest. Verse 11, saith he, "Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are;"—"Keep them from sin and ruin, from every thing that will hinder them from union with me." What is it that our Saviour here prays for, and for whom is he so engaged? That it is for believers, as such, for whom he puts up these supplications, our adversaries in the cause in hand do contend. That these may be

kept through the power of God unto unity among themselves, which they have by their union with him, is his dying request for them. He prays not for such oneness as is consistent with their separation from his and his Father's love. Where now shall we fix the supposed failure of those who effectually and eventually are kept up to spiritual union, who cannot fall out of nor fall off from (totally nor finally) the love of God? Either Christ is not heard in his request, or the Father cannot keep them by his power, if these thus interceded for are not preserved. Many temptations, many oppositions, great tribulations without, strong corruptions within, they must needs meet withal: these they have no power in themselves to overcome nor to resist. Should they be left to themselves, they would never be able to hold out to the end. Saith Christ, "I shall lose these poor sheep for whom I have 'laid down my life' to bring them unto thee. Holy Father, do thou therefore keep and preserve them from all these evils, that they may not prevail over them. And 'keep them through thy name,' thy power" (for we are "kept through the power of God unto salvation"); "let thy power be exerted for their preservation. And what is too strong for thy power? Who can take them out of thy hand? Lay that upon them for their defence, show it out in their behalf, that all their enemies may feel the weight and strength thereof. 'Keep them through thy name,' thy grace; let that be sufficient for them. Let them have such supplies of gospel grace and pardoning mercy (concerning which I manifested thy name unto them, verse 6, and so revealed thee [as] a Father), that they may be encouraged to trust in that name of thine, and to stay themselves upon thee." Where the failure is, doubtless is not easy to manifest. In the verses following our Saviour adds many motives to make his intercession prevalent in their behalf:—

First, Verse 12, he saith that, according to that commission that he had received, he had faithfully preserved them whilst that he was in the world; and now being ready to leave them, as to his bodily presence, he urges the special preservation of his Father as needful, that after all the care and cost which he had laid out about them, they might not utterly perish. And then,—

Secondly. Verse 13, he urges the necessity that they should have some assurance of it in the midst of all their troubles and trials, that they may have consolation upon their confidence in the words which Christ had spoken to them, that they should be preserved through all difficulties unto the end. And he farther urges,—

Thirdly, Verse 14, from the certain opposition that they should meet withal, "'The world hateth them,' and will, without doubt, use all ways and means possible for their ruin and destruction;" giving also the reason why the world hateth them, and will oppose them, which is such an one as must needs engage the heart and good-will of

God for their preservation, to wit, because they received the word of his dear Son, and upon that account left the world, separated from it, and became its enemies. And shall they now be left to the rage and fury of the world in this condition? "That be far from thee; 'holy Father, keep them.'" Hereupon,—

Fourthly, Verse 15, he reneweth his prayer in their behalf, with a farther opening of his mind as to what he had last spoken of. "The world," the world being vile, wretched, deceitful, and set upon opposition against them, a man would have thought that the Lord Jesus should have desired that his saints might be taken out from the midst of this world, and set in a quiet place by themselves, where they might no more be troubled with the baits and oppositions of it. But this is not that which he requests. He hath another work for them to do in the world. They are to bear witness to him and his truth by their faith and obedience, to convince the wicked, unbelieving world; they are to glorify his name by doing and suffering for him: so that this is no part of his request. "I pray not," saith he, "that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that they may not be prevailed on nor conquered by the evil that is in the world; that they may be kept and preserved from the power of evil, which would separate them from me and my love." This he presseth for, and this he is heard in; and that not only for his apostles and present followers, but as he tells you, verse 20, for all that should believe on him to the end of the world.

The things prayed for, the reason of his intercession, the opposition against the accomplishment of the things interceded for, the distinction put between them for whom he intercedes and the perishing world,—all delivered in plain and expressive terms,—evidently evince the intendment of Christ in his intercession to regard the safeguarding of believers in the love and favour of God, by their continuance in believing, and preservation from the power of temptations and oppositions arising against their perseverance in communion with God.

The result of what hath been spoken, as to its influence into the confirmation of the truth under demonstration, amounts unto thus much: That which the Lord Jesus, as mediator, requesteth and prayeth for continually of the Father, according to his mind, in order to the accomplishment of the promises made to him and covenant with him (all his desires being bottomed upon his exact, perfect performance of *the whole will of God*, both in doing and suffering), that shall certainly be accomplished and brought to pass; but thus, in this manner, upon these accounts, doth the Lord Jesus intercede for the perseverance of believers, and their preservation in the love of the Father unto the end: therefore, they shall undoubtedly be so preserved. It is confessed that the persons interceded for are be-

lievers, all believers that then were, or should be to the end of the world (the efficacy of this intercession having commenced from the foundation thereof); the thing prayed for is their preservation in the state of union with Christ and one another; the motives used for the obtaining this request in their behalf are taken from the work they have to do, and the opposition they were to meet withal. And all the saints being thus put into the hand of God, who shall take them from thence? On what account is it that they shall not be preserved? To say they shall be thus preserved in case themselves depart not wilfully from God, is to say they shall be preserved in case they preserve themselves, as will afterward be farther manifested.

This argument is proposed by the apostle in the most triumphant assurance of the truth and certainty of the inference contained in it that he anywhere useth, in any case whatsoever: Rom. viii. 33, 34, "Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us." He lays the immunity of the elect and justified persons from just crimination or condemnation on the foundation of the oblation and intercession of Christ. The first part of this argument from the oblation of Christ ("Who shall condemn? It is Christ that died"), asserting the immunity of believers from condemnation, upon the account of the punishing of all their sins in Christ, and the perfect satisfaction made by his death for them, whence the justice of God in the issue will not have any thing to lay to their charge, we have formerly insisted on; the other, which the apostle induces emphatically and comparatively, though not in respect of procurement and purchase made, yet of assurance to be given, with μᾶλλον δέ, in respect of his oblation, is that now before us. To make the assurance of believers plentiful, that they may know both the truth of his first general assertion, that all things shall work together for good to them, and this particular conclusion, now laid down by way of interrogation, rejecting all evil opposed to their former enjoyments, "Who shall lay any thing to their charge? who shall condemn?" he gives them a threefold consideration of the state and actings of the Lord Christ, after the expiation of their sins by his blood, in reference to them:—1. "He is risen;" 2. "He is at the right hand of God;" 3. "Maketh intercession for them:"—the first denoting his *acquitment*, and theirs in him (for he died in their stead), from all the sins that were charged on him; for he was declared to be the Son of God, accepted with him, and justified from all that debt which he undertook, in his resurrection. And if he be risen, who shall lay any thing to the charge of them whom he died for, and for all whose sins, in their stead, he was acquitted? The second is his *exaltation* and power; for "having purged our sins, he

sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high," Heb. i. 3, receiving thereby a most plenary demonstration of his Father's good-will to him and his, in respect of the work that he had undertaken and gone through for them: for if he had not "made an end of sin," when he was "obedient unto death, the death of the cross," he could not expect that God should give him "a name above every name," with fulness of power to give eternal life to all that the Father gave him. This to assure us that he will do, having power in his own hand, the apostle adds, "Who also *intercedes* for us;" hereby, thirdly, testifying abundantly his good-will and care for our salvation. Upon these considerations, the apostle leads the faith of the saints of God to make a conclusion, which is to be believed as a divine truth, that tenders to us the doctrine we have under demonstration triumphant against all objections and oppositions that can be made against it. And hence we thus argue: Those against whom no charge can be laid, who cannot by any means be separated from the love of God in Christ, cannot totally and finally fall away from faith, and fall out of God's favour. But that this is the condition of all true believers is evident from the context. It is of all that are called according to the purpose of God, justified, and sanctified,—the proper description of all and only believers,—that the apostle affirms these things, and to whom he ascribes the condition mentioned. Now, that this is the state and condition of those persons, the apostle manifesteth from the causes of it,—namely, the oblation and intercession of Christ in their behalf; for those for whom he died and doth intercede are on that account exempted from any such charge as might be of prevalency to separate them from God.

Mr Goodwin attempts, indeed, once more to re-enforce the triumphed-over enemies of the saints, and to call them once more to make head against the intercession of Christ; but with what ill success, the consideration of what arguments he useth with them and for them will demonstrate. Thus, then, he addresseth himself to his task, chap. xi. sect. 33, p. 248, "I answer, It is nowhere affirmed that Christ intercedes for the perseverance of the saints in their faith, or they who once believed should never cease believing, how sinful and wicked soever they should prove afterward; but Christ intercedes for his saints as such, and so continuing such, that no accusation from any hand whatsoever may be heard against them, that no afflictions or sufferings which they meet with in the world may cause any alienation or abatement in the love of God towards them, but that God will protect and preserve them under them, and consequently that they may be maintained at an excellent rate of consolation in every state and condition, and against all interposures of any creature to the contrary."

This answer hath long since ceased to be new to us; it is that, in-

deed, which is the shield behind which Mr Goodwin lies, to avoid the force of all manner of arguments pointed against himself, though it be the most weak and frivolous that ever, I suppose, was used in so weighty a matter. It is here cast (as he hath many moulds and shapes to cast it in) into a denial of the assumption of our syllogism, and a reason of that denial. First, he denies that Christ intercedes for believers that they may persevere in their faith; he prays not for their perseverance.

His reason of this is twofold:—1. A supposal that "they may prove so wicked as not to continue believing." 2. A description of what Christ intercedes for in the behalf of believers, namely, "that they may continue in God's love if they do continue to believe, notwithstanding all their afflictions." "Homo homini quid interest?" Whether men will or no, these must pass for oracular dictates.

1. For the first, let what hath been spoken already be weighed, and see if there be not yet hope left for poor souls that Christ prays for them that their faith fail not. And, by the way, who will not embrace this *comfortable* doctrine, that will assure him, in his agonies, temptations, and failings, that all help and supplies are made out to him from and by the Lord Jesus, in whom is all his hope, and that he receives of his Father, upon his intercession, all the fruits of his death and blood-shedding in his behalf; but that he should believe, or, being tempted, should be preserved in believing, of that Christ takes no thought, nor did ever intercede with his Father for any such an end or purpose! Such consolation might befit Job's friends: "Miserable comforters, physicians of no value." But of this before.

2. For that supposal of his, of their proving wicked afterward to an inconsistency with believing, it hath often been corrected for a sturdy beggar, and sent away grumbling and hungry, and, were it not for pure necessity, would never once be owned any more by its master. Christ intercedes not for believers that they may persevere in the faith upon such foolish supposals, whose opposite is continuance in the faith, and so is coincident with the thing itself interceded for. To intercede that they may continue believing, is to intercede that they may never be so wicked as Mr Goodwin supposeth they may be. The end asserted of Christ's intercession for the saints is, that they may never wickedly depart from God. Doth Mr Goodwin indeed take this to be the tenor of the doctrine he opposeth, and of the argument which he undertakes to answer,—namely, that the faith of believers, and the continuance of that, is interceded for without any reference to the work of faith in gospel obedience and communion with God in Christ? or if he thinks not so, why doth he so often insist on this calumnious evasion?

In giving the aim of Christ in his intercession for believers, we have this new cogent argument against our position, "Christ inter-

cedes for the things here by me mentioned; therefore he doth not intercede for the perseverance of the saints." But why so? Is there any inconsistency in these things, any repugnancy in terms, or contrariety of the things themselves? Christ intercedes that believers may enjoy the love of God; therefore he doth not intercede that they may be established in believing!

The sum of all that is here ascribed to the intercession of Christ at the best is, That God will confirm and ratify that everlasting law, that believers continuing so to the end shall be saved; which whether it be the sum of Christ's intercession for his church or no, that church will judge. If there be any thing farther, or of more importance to them, in what is assigned to it by Mr Goodwin, it is wrapped up in the knot of "etc.," which I am not able to untie.

These words of the apostle, "Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect?" do not denote that this is the intercession of Christ for them, that no accusation be admitted against them whilst they believe, which is no more but the confirmation of that general proposition of the gospel before mentioned; but it is the conclusion which they make upon the account of the intercession of Christ, in the application of the promise of the gospel to their own souls. Neither is there any more weight in that which follows, "That there be no abatement or alienation of the love of God from them upon the account of their sufferings and afflictions;" which for the most part are for his sake. What saints of God were almost so much as once tempted with a conceit that God's love should be abated or alienated from them because they suffered for him?

And this is the foundation of that "excellent rate of consolation at which the saints, upon the account of the intercession of Christ, may be maintained:" "Into afflictions, temptations, trials, they may fall; but if they continue in faith and love they shall not be rejected. No creature shall be heard against them; that Christ takes care for: but for the worst enemies they have, their own lusts, corruptions, and unbelief, the fiery darts of Satan fighting against their souls, with their continuance in believing,—the falling from whence is indeed all the danger they are exposed to, for whilst they continue so doing, all other things are lighter than vanity,—these Christ takes no care about" (though he prays that God would sanctify them and keep them), "but they must shift for themselves as well as they can; he will not, doth not intercede for them that from these they may be preserved." Doubtless, he that shall think to be maintained long at any high rate of consolation, and lays in no other nor no better provision to live on than this mentioned, will quickly be reduced to a *dry morsel.*

But yet some reasons of the foregoing interpretation of this place of the apostle, Rom. viii., are offered unto us:—

[First], "This to be the tenor and effect of Christ's intercession for his saints," saith he, "is evident from the first of the three passages cited; and for that demand, 'Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?' it is not meant from the love wherewith we love Christ, but from the love wherewith Christ loveth us as we are saints, and abide in his love, and keep his commands. Neither is it so to be conceived as if sin, wickedness, looseness, profaneness, could not unsaint men, and thereby separate them from that love wherewith Christ some time loved them (for that iniquity will separate between men and their God is evident from Isa. lix. 2); but the clear meaning is, that nothing, no creature whatsoever, person or thing, can make Christ an enemy to those who shall in faith and love cleave fast unto him."

Ans. All this respecteth only one expression in this one place of Scripture, and ariseth not with the least power against our argument, taken from many places in conjunction, explicatory one of another. It runs also upon the same mistake with the former, taking the exultation of believers upon the intercession of Christ in their behalf, which holds out the issue of it, to be expressive of the matter of his intercession, being only a demonstration of the event of it. But grant this to be the tenor and effect of Christ's intercession, that believers may not be separated from his love, is he heard herein, or is he not? Whatsoever be the issue of the question, our procedure will be facile. But it is said that it is not "the love wherewith we love Christ, but that wherewith he loveth us, that we shall not be separated from." Take this also for granted, that it is that, and that only, will this advantage your cause? If we be never separated from that love that Christ bears us, is it possible we should wholly be separated from that love that we bear him? Wherein consists our separation from that love that Christ bears us? How is it caused, or may it be procured? Is it not by the loss of our faith and love to him? or, at least, is it not an inseparable consequence thereof? or can it possibly come to pass any otherwise than on that account? If, then, he intercedes that we may not be separated from that love he bears us, and that love infers the continuance of ours, doth he not withal intercede that we may never lose that love wherewith we love him, by which we continue in his love? If the old shift be not at hand for a relief, this young part of the answer will instantly suffer loss. It is added therefore, "He loveth us as we are saints and abide in his love,"—that is (for so we must understand it), whilst we are so; for that he bears any effectual love to us to keep us up to saintship, that is denied. It is true, Christ loveth us as saints, and as abiding in his commandments; but it is also his love to keep us, and he intercedeth that we may abide, in that condition wherein alone it is possible for us so to do. Neither is the

question whether sin, looseness, profaneness, do not separate between God and men, more or less; but whether believers shall not be preserved from such looseness and profaneness as would make a total separation between God and them? And if God [Christ?] intercedes, as is added in the close, that nothing may make him an enemy to us, certainly he must intercede that no sin may do it,—for indeed sin is something in this business,—and this must be as to the keeping us from it. I suppose no man thinks any thing in all this discourse of Mr Goodwin's to look like the least attempt of proof that Christ doth not intercede for the perseverance of saints; neither hath he confidence enough positively to deny it, and therefore spends his whole discourse hereabout in evasions and diversions. Let it be directly denied that Christ doth not intend that the faith of believers may not fail, that his saints may be preserved and saved, and we know what we have to apply ourselves unto; and if the contrary cannot be proved, the saints know what they have to trust unto, that they may no longer lean on that which will yield them no supportment. If this will not be, let it on the other hand be granted that he doth so intercede; for "de unoquoque affirmare, aut negare, verum est." As to this, then, he proceeds:—

Secondly, "Were it granted that part of Christ's intercession for his saints is, that their faith may never fail, yet the intent thereof would not necessarily, nor indeed with any competent probability, be this, that no sin nor wickedness whatsoever that shall or can be perpetrated by them might cause them to make shipwreck of their faith, but rather that God would graciously vouchsafe such means and such a presence of his Spirit unto them as whereby they may be richly enabled to keep themselves in faith and good conscience to the end."

Ans. Whether prejudiced men will grant it or no, it is clearly proved, if the words of Christ themselves may be taken for proof, that he intercedes for his saints that their faith may not fail, and that notwithstanding the interposition of any such sins as they can or may ("suppositis supponendis," amongst which is his intercession) fall into. So he tells Peter, upon the prediction of his dreadful fall, that nevertheless he had prayed for him that his faith should not fail. That they may fall into such sins, and continue in such, as are inconsistent with their acceptation with God, according to the terms and tenor of the new covenant, is that which we have been disproving all this while, and which our author ought not, as he doth in all his reasonings, to suppose. In the not failing or dying of their faith, in their preservation therein, is included their deliverance from the perpetration of the sins intimated, or at least from such a manner of committing any sin as should utterly separate them from God. It is the continuance of a living faith that Christ prays for; and where

that is, there will be works of new obedience, and there will be the work of that faith in purifying the heart and mortifying of the sins supposed. Farther; the way here prescribed and limited to the Lord Jesus how he shall intercede for his, and for what,—namely, not for actual perseverance and continuance in the faith to be wrought in them by the exceeding greatness of the power of God, but for means to enable them to preserve themselves,—we are persuaded he walks not in; and that much upon this account, that the way whereby God begins and carries on believers in the way of faith and obedience is not by such a supply of means as leaves them to themselves to work and effect the things for which they are so supplied, but he himself "works in them to will and to do of his own good pleasure, fulfilling in them all the good pleasure of his goodness and the work of faith with power," giving them all their sufficiency, and preserving them by his power "through faith unto salvation." To make faith, and perseverance therein, to follow such a supply of means as leaves the production of them to the power of the wills of men, so that after God hath done all that on his part is to be done or performed,—that is, quickened them being dead, giving them new hearts and spirits, shone into their minds, to give them the knowledge of his glory in the face of his Son, etc.,—it is yet uncertain whether ever faith shall be wrought in their souls or no, or rather whether men so supplied with means will believe and persevere or no, is an assertion that will never be proved to eternity, nor, whilst truth is truth, is it capable of proof. "The granting of such means and such a presence of his Spirit, that men may be enabled to work for themselves," is an expression exceedingly unsuited to all the promises of the new covenant. Whatever either of the Spirit of grace or the means of it is given out to believers, Christ intercedes that his Father would keep them, not that they should keep themselves. He was too well acquainted with our frame and our temptations to desire we might be our own keepers. God forbid we should be left to our own preservation, to the hand of our own counsel and power, though compassed with all the supposed sufficient means, that may be not eventually effectual! God creates a defence upon our glory, and doth not leave it to our own safeguarding. Our salvation is not in our own custody. That the Father doth not keep us or preserve us, that the Son doth not intercede that we may be so preserved, that the Spirit doth not make us meet for and keep us unto the inheritance of the saints in light, but that in the use of means we are, as Adam was, our own keepers, are some of the principles of that new way of administering consolation to believers which Mr Goodwin hath found out. This, then, is the utmost which Mr Goodwin will allow to be (for disputation's sake, not that he really believes it) granted, that Christ intercedes for his saints as to their continuance and pre-

servation in that condition, namely, that God would give them such means as they may use or not use at their liberty, which may be effectual or not effectual, as their own wills shall choose to make use of them; which he also takes for granted to be common to all the world, and not to be peculiar unto believers.

But it is farther argued, "If Christ should simply and absolutely intercede that no sin or wickedness whatsoever may destroy the faith of any true believer, and consequently deprive him of salvation, should he not hereby become that which the apostle rejects with indignation as altogether unworthy of him, I mean, a minister of sin? 'Is therefore Christ the minister of sin? God forbid.' Or whereby, or wherein, can it lightly be imagined that Christ should become a minister of sin, rather than by interceding with his Father that such and such men, how vile and abominable soever they shall become, may yet be precious in his sight, and receive a crown of righteousness from his hand? Or doth not such an intercession as some men put upon him, as they who make him to intercede simply and absolutely for the perseverance of believers in their faith, amount to an intercession of every whit as vile and unworthy import as this?"

Ans. 1. That this is the tenor of Christ's intercession with his Father for men, "let them become as vile as they will, how vile and abominable soever, yet that they may be still precious in his sight, and that he would give them a crown of righteousness," Mr Goodwin knoweth full well not to be the doctrine of them he opposeth. If he shall otherwise affirm, it will be incumbent on him to produce some one author that hath wrote about this doctrine, in what language soever, and so stated it. If he be ignorant that this is not their doctrine, he ought not to have engaged into an opposition thereof. If he argue that it is otherwise, this procedure is unworthy of him. That Christ intercedes for his saints that they may be kept from all such sins as would separate them from the love and favour of his Father, for which there is no remedy provided in the covenant of grace, and that their faith may not fail or perish under such sins as they may through temptation fall into, is the doctrine which he opposeth, or at least ought to oppose, to make good his undertaking. "Now, if this be so, then," saith he, "is Christ the minister of sin." Why so? He sees and foretells that Peter should deny him thrice, yet he prays that Peter's faith may not fail under that sin and wickedness. Is he therefore a minister of sin? Because he intercedes that his saints may not be given up to the power of sin, nor every time they are assaulted lie conquered by sin, is he therefore a minister of sin? or rather a deliverer from sin? That very thing which Mr Goodwin affirms would make him a minister of sin, he affirms himself to do in the case of Peter. How he will free himself from this charge and imputation, *ipse viderit.*

2. What it is to intercede *simply* and *absolutely* for believers, that they may continue believing, we are not so clear in. Christ intercedes that they may be preserved by the power of his Father, in and through the use of those means which he graciously affords them, and the powerful presence of the Spirit of God with them therein; and that not on any such absurd and foolish conditions as that they may be so preserved by his Father provided they preserve themselves, and continue believers on condition they continue to believe. And if this be of a "vile and unworthy import," the gospel is so too, and one of the most eminent graces that are inwrapped in the new covenant is so too.

What there is farther in Mr Goodwin, sect. 34, pp. 249, 250, unto this argument, is either a mere repetition of what was spoken before, or a pressing of consequences upon such supposals as he is pleased to make concerning the doctrine that he doth oppose. As we cannot hinder any man from making what supposals they please, and suiting inferences to them, manifesting their skill in casting down what themselves set up, so we are not in the least concerned in such theatrical contests.

What it is that we teach of the intercession of Christ for believers hath been sufficiently explained: the end and aim of it is, that they may be kept, that they may not be lost, that the evil one may not touch them, that they may be saved to the uttermost, and kept by the power of God unto salvation; all that the Lord Jesus hath for his church, either by his oblation or his intercession, procured, or doth procure, being made out unto them by the holy and blessed Spirit, which he sent them from his Father as the first-fruits of his undertaking for them, by and in the use of such means and ways as he hath appointed for them to walk in in reference to the end proposed. He intercedes that, through supplies of that Spirit, their faith fail not, that no temptation prevail against them, that they may have suitable helps in time of need, and so be preserved, according to the tenor of that sanctification which he is pleased to give them in this life, which is imperfect, not from all sins, for it is the will of God to keep them and walk with them in a covenant of pardoning mercy; not absolutely from this or that great sin, as is evident in the case of David and Peter, whereof, under such sins, the one lost not the Spirit nor the other his faith; but from such sins, or such a course or way in and under sin, as would disappoint him, and make his desires frustrate as to the end first proposed, of bringing them to glory. So that, as the intendment of his oblation is meritoriously, and by way of procurement, to take away all our sins whatsoever, and yet in the application of it unto us, as to the taking of them away, by purifying us to be a holy people unto himself, it is not perfected and completed at once, nor the work thereof consummated

but by degrees; so in his intercession, which respecteth the same persons and things with his oblation, he puts in for our deliverance from all sins and the power of them, but so and in such a manner as the nature of our present condition, whilst we are *in via*, and the condition of the covenant whereinto God hath graciously taken us, do require.

Through the goodness of God, we have now brought this *first part* to an end. They who are in any measure acquainted in what straits, under what pressing employments and urgent avocations, and in what space of time, this offering was provided for the sanctuary of God, will accept it in Him, whose it is, and from whom it was received.

CHAPTER X.

THE IMPROVEMENT OF THE DOCTRINE.

The improvement of the doctrine of perseverance in reference to the obedience and consolation of the saints—Why its tendency to the promoting of their obedience is first handled, before their consolation—Five previous observations concerning gospel truths in general—1. That all are to be received with equal reverence—2. That the end of them all is to work the soul into a conformity to God—Proved by several scriptures, 2 Tim. iii. 16, 17; Tit. i. 1, etc.—3. Some truths have a more immediate tendency hereunto than others have, 2 Cor. v. 14—4. Most weight is to be laid by believers upon such—5. Men are not themselves to determine what truths have most in them of this tendency, etc.—Gospel obedience, what it is, and why so called—Its nature—1. In the matter of it, which is all and only the will of God—2. In the form of it, which is considered—(1.) In the principle setting it on work, faith—(2.) In the manner of doing it, eyeing both precepts and promises—(3.) The end aimed at in it, the glory of God as a rewarder, Heb. xi. 6: Rom. iv. 4—The principle in us whence it proceeds, which is the new man, the Spirit, proved, Eph. iii. 16-19, etc.—What kind of motives conduce most to the carrying on of this obedience, namely, such as most cherish this new man, which they do most that discover most of the love of God and his good-will in Christ—Such as these are alone useful to mortification and the subduing of the contrary principle of flesh, which hinders our obedience, proved, Tit. ii. 11, 12; Rom. vi.—What persons the improvement of this doctrine concerns; only true believers, who will not abuse it—How this doctrine of perseverance conduces so eminently to the carrying on of gospel obedience in the hearts of these true believers—1. By removing discouragements—(1.) Perplexing fears, which impair their faith; (2.) Hard thoughts of God, which weaken their love: without which two, faith and love, no gospel obedience performed—2. Unspeakable obligations to live to God hence put upon the souls of the saints—Objections concerning the abuse of this truth to presumption and carelessness discussed, examined at large, and removed—The mortification of the flesh, wherein it consists, how it is performed—The influence of the doctrine of the saints' perseverance thereinto—Dread and terror of hell not the means of mortification, at large proved by showing quite another means of mortifying the flesh, namely, the Spirit of Christ, Rom. viii. 13; applying the cross and death of Christ, chap. vi. 5, 6—3. This doctrine is useful to promote gospel

obedience, in that it tends directly to increase and strengthen faith and love both towards God and towards our Lord Jesus Christ—How it strengthens their love to God, namely, by discovering his love to them in three eminent properties of it, freedom, constancy, fruitfulness—How it strengthens their love to Jesus Christ, namely, by discovering his love to them in two eminent acts of it, his oblation and his intercession—4. This doctrine conduces, etc., by giving gospel obedience its proper place and due order—5. By closing in with the ends of gospel ordinances, particularly the ministry, one eminent end whereof is to perfect the saints, Eph. iv. 12, 13. which is done by discovering to them the whole will of God, both precepts on the one hand, and promises, exhortations, threatenings, on the other—That of the promises more particularly and more largely insisted on.

THAT which remains to complete our intendment, as to that part of the work which now draws towards a close, is the importment of that doctrine so long insisted on (having in some measure vindicated and cleared up the truth of it) as to the effectual influence it hath into the *obedience* and *consolation* of them that are concerned therein; and this I shall do in the order that I have named, giving the pre-eminence unto their obedience, which, more immediately respecting the glory of God and the honour of the gospel, is to be preferred before their consolation. Yea, though God should never afford his saints any drop of that consolation which we affirm to stream from the truth discussed, yet it is honour unspeakable for them that he is pleased to admit them and enable them to do him service in this life, and it will be their infinite consolation that they have done so, to eternity.

For the making our way clear to the demonstration of that influence which the doctrine of the perseverance of the saints hath into their obedience and close walking with God, and so to manifest what weight is to be laid upon it on that consideration, I shall give some previous observations, which may direct and give us light in our passage, both concerning gospel truths, gospel obedience, and gospel motives thereunto. I hope it will not be thought amiss if I look a little backward, to fortify and clear this part of our progress, there being no concernment of our doctrine that is more clamoured [against] by the adversaries of it; nor can any respect of it or any truth of God more causelessly meet with such entertainment, as I hope will abundantly, in the progress of our business, be evinced to the consciences of all who know indeed what it is to walk before God in a course of gospel obedience, and who have their communion with the Father and his Son Jesus Christ. For the first:—

1. Every truth revealed from God is to be received not only with *faith* and *love*, but with *equal reverence* to any that is revealed, though we are not able to discern such an *immediate* tendency unto usefulness in our communion with him as in some others we may. The formal reason whereinto our faith, love, and reverence

unto the word of God is resolved is that it is *His*. Now, this is common to the whole, for he is the author of every part and portion alike; and though perhaps we may want some part of it at a less fatal price than some other, yet to reject any one tittle or jot of it, as that which is revealed of God, is a sufficient demonstration that no one jot or tittle of it is received as it ought. Upon whatever this title and inscription is, *Verbum Jehovæ*, there must we stoop and bow down our souls before it, and captivate our understandings to the obedience of faith. Whatsoever, then, may hereafter be spoken concerning the usefulness of the truth under consideration, and the comparative regard which, in respect of others, ought on that account to be had thereunto, doth not in the least exalt it, as it is in itself, in respect of the faith and reverence due thereunto, above any other truth whatsoever that is in Scripture revealed.

2. That next to *the revelation of God*, his will and his grace, the grand immediate tendency of the whole Scripture is to work them to whom the revelation is made into a conformity to himself, and to mould them into his own image. "All Scripture," the apostle tells us, 2 Tim. iii. 16, 17, "is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works." Hereunto all Scripture tends, and is useful and profitable for this end. And the gospel is called "the truth that is according to godliness," Tit. i. 1; as "the end of the law is charity out of a pure heart, and a good conscience, and faith unfeigned," 1 Tim. i. 5. That which in respect of the prime Author of it is λόγος Θεοῦ, "the word of God," 1 Thess. ii. 13; and in respect of the principal matter of it is ὁ λόγος ὁ τοῦ σταυροῦ, "the word of the cross," 1 Cor. i. 18; in respect of its end and tendency towards us is λόγος εὐσεβείας, "the word," or truth, "that is according to godliness." The word is that revealed will of God, which is our sanctification, 1 Thess. iv. 3, and the instrument whereby he works our holiness, according to that prayer of our Saviour, "Sanctify them by thy truth: thy word is truth," John xvii. 17. And that which, when we are cast into the mould of our obedience, is in some measure wrought, Rom. vi. 17, the substance also or matter being written in our hearts, is the grace and holiness promised unto us in the covenant, Jer. xxxi. 33. And that this is the improvement which ought to be made by believers of every gospel truth, or rather, that it hath an efficacy to this purpose, the apostle tells us, 2 Cor. iii. 18, "We all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." By apprehensions of the glorious truths discovered in the glass or mirror of the gospel, we are changed and moulded into the frame and image therein discovered by the power of the Spirit, effectually accom-

panying the word in the dispensation thereof. And unless this be done, whatsoever we may pretend, we have not received any truth of the gospel as it is in Jesus, in the power of it: Eph. iv. 20–24, "Ye have not," saith the apostle, "so learned Christ; if so be that ye have heard him, and have been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus: that ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; and be renewed in the spirit of your mind; and that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness." Whatsoever men may profess, if we have learned the truth as it is in Jesus, it will have these effects in us, even universal relinquishment (as to sincerity) of all ungodliness, and a thorough change, both as to principles and practices, unto holiness and to righteousness, which the gospel teaches us; which if we have not learned, we have not yet learned it "as it is in Jesus." Tit. ii. 11, 12, "The grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world."

3. Some truths have a more immediate, direct, and effectual tendency to the promotion of godliness and gospel obedience than others. This the apostle emphatically ascribes as a privilege to that doctrine that reveals the love of Christ unto us: 2 Cor. v. 14, "The love of Christ constraineth us." Other things effectually *persuade*, but the love of Christ *constrains* us to live to him. It hath an importunity with it not to be denied, an efficacy not to be put off or avoided. And what is in the things themselves, as in the love of Christ, that is in its manner, in "the word of truth," whereby it is revealed.

4. That there is, by all that walk with God, great weight to be laid on those *doctrines of truth* which directly and effectually tend to the promotion of *faith, love, fear, reverence of God, with universal holiness* in their hearts and ways; this being that whereunto they are called, and whereby God is glorified, Jesus Christ and the gospel exalted, wherein his kingdom in them consists, on which their own peace in their own bosoms, their usefulness unto others in this world, their being made meet for the inheritance of the saints in light, do much depend. If these things be of weight or moment unto them (as surely they are all that is so to believers), then, doubtless, great valuation and dear esteem will be entertained of those helps and assistances which they have, leading and carrying them on thereunto.

5. That a judgment of what truths and doctrines are peculiarly conducing unto the promotion of piety and godliness is not to be made upon the apprehensions and reasonings of men, wrested with a thousand corruptions and prejudices, full of darkness and vanity, but according to what the Scripture itself holds forth, and the nature

of the things themselves (that is, the *evidence* and *consequence* that is between the *truth* revealed and *obedience*) doth require. If the testimonies of the sons of men must be admitted in this case, to determine what doctrine is according to godliness, the cry and noise of them will be found so various, discrepant, confused, and directly contradictory to itself, that none will ever thereby be led to establishment. Then Papists will cry out for their merits, penance, vows, purgatory; the Socinians, familists, formalists, all contend, upon the foundation of their own persuasions, as to the tendency to godliness of their abominations. That doctrine which hath no other proof of its truth and worth but that men, some men, profess it tends to godliness and holiness of conversation, I dare say is a lie and vanity, and did never promote any thing but vain, legal, superstitious, counterfeit holiness. Indeed, upon a supposition of its truth, it is of concernment, for the advancement of any doctrine in the esteem and opinion of the saints, to manifest that it leads to godliness; but to prove it to be true because men who perhaps never knew any thing beyond formal, legal, pharisaical holiness all their days, say it tends to the promotion of holiness, is but to obtrude our conceptions upon others that are no way moulded into the frame of them. "That the embracement of such a truth will further us in our *obedience* and walking with God, therefore value and prize it," is good arguing; but, "That such a doctrine will further us in a way of godliness, therefore it is a truth," when we may be mistaken both in godliness itself and in the motives to it and furtherances of it, is but a presumption. To commend, then, the truth which we have at large otherwise confirmed to the hearts and consciences of the saints of God, and to lay a foundation for the full removal of those vain and weak exceptions which, on this account, are laid against it, I shall manifest what influences it hath into their obedience, and with what eminent efficacy it prevails upon their souls to "perfect holiness in the fear of God." For the more clear declaration whereof I shall give the reader the sum of it, under the ensuing considerations concerning gospel obedience, and the motives that are proper thereunto.

That which I call *gospel obedience*, wherein the saints of God are furthered by the belief of the truth we have in hand, is variously expressed in the Scripture. It may in general be described to be *a voluntary orderly subjection to the whole will of God.* I call it *obedience* in reference unto the will of God, which is the rule and pattern of it, and whereunto it is in a regular subjection. The psalmist expresses it to the full, both as to the root and fruit: Ps. xl. 8, "I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart." The law in the heart gives us to do, and to delight in doing, the will of God. Peter calls it being "holy in all manner of conversation," 1 Pet. i. 14, 15; Paul, a "cleansing of ourselves from all filthiness

of the flesh and spirit in the fear of God," 2 Cor. vii. 1; or, as it is more eminently described, Rom. xii. 1, 2, in that pathetical exhortation of the apostle thereunto, "I beseech you, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed unto this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God," as he had formerly at large described it in the sixth chapter of that epistle throughout. And I call it *gospel obedience*, not that it differs in substance, as to the matter of it, from that required by the law, which enjoins us to "love the LORD our God with all our heart," but that it moves upon principles and is carried on unto ends revealed only in the gospel.

In reference to our design, there are these four things considerable in it:—First, The *nature* of it; Secondly, The *principle* in us from whence it proceeds; Thirdly, The *motives* that are proper to the carrying it on, the cherishing and increasing of it in them in whom it is; Fourthly, The *persons* who are to be moved and provoked to a progress therein.

By a brief consideration of these things, we shall make way for what we have undertaken,—namely, to manifest the efficacy of the doctrine we have insisted on for the promotion of this gospel obedience, it being accused and charged with the clean contrary tendency; whereof, God assisting, we shall free and discharge it in the progress of this discourse.

First, In the nature of it, I shall consider only these two things:—1. The *matter* or *substance* of it; what it is as it were composed of, and wherein it doth consist. 2. The *form* or *manner* of its performance, whence it receives its distinct being as such.

1. The *matter* or *substance* of it contains those things or duties to God wherein it doth consist. Now, it consisting, as I said before, in conformity and submission to the will, that is, the commanding revealed will, of God, the matter of it must lie in the performance of all those things, and only those things, which God requireth of believers in walking before him; I say, all those things that God commandeth, with an equal respect to *all* his precepts. The authority of God, the commander and lawgiver, is the same in every command; and therefore was the curse denounced upon "every one that continued not in all things written in the law to do them;" and the apostle tells us that in the transgression of any one precept there is included the transgression of the whole law, because the authority of the lawgiver, both in the one and the other, is despised: James ii. 10, 11, "Whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all. For he that said, Do not commit adultery, said also, Do not kill." And I say, it is *only* to the command,

for "in vain do men worship him, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men." The most stupendous endeavours of men, the most laborious drudgery of their souls, in duties not commanded, are so far from obedience that they are as high rebellions against God as they can possibly engage themselves into.

I might rather distinguish the matter or substance of this obedience into *the internal elicit act of our souls*, in faith, love, and the like acts of moral and everlasting obedience,—which are naturally, necessarily, and indispensably, required in us upon the account of the first commandment, and the natural subjection wherein we stand unto God as his creatures, improved and enlarged by the new obligation put upon us in being his redeemed ones (wherein, indeed, the main of our obedience doth consist),—and *the outward instituted duties of religion*, which God hath appointed for those former acts of obedience to be exercised in and exerted by; but the former description of it, with the intimation of its universality, may suffice.

2. The *formality*, if I may so speak, of this obedience, or that which makes the performance of duties commanded to be obedience, consists in these three things:—

(1.) The *principle* that begins it and sets it on work immediately in us, and that is faith: "Without faith it is impossible to please God," Heb. xi. 6. Could a man do all that is commanded, yet if he did it not in faith, it would be of no value. Hence it is called "The obedience of faith," Rom. i. 5; not "For obedience to the faith," but[1] "The obedience of faith," which faith bringeth forth. Therefore are believers called "obedient children," 1 Pet. i. 14, and we are said to "purify our souls in obeying the truth," verse 22. "Christ dwells in our hearts by faith," and "without him we can do nothing," John xv. 5. All that we do is no better, seeing we can no way "draw near unto God with a true heart" but "in full assurance of faith," Heb. x. 22.

(2.) The *manner* of doing it, which consists in a due *spiritual* regard to the will of God in those ways whereby he calls men out to this obedience,—namely, in his precepts and promises. There is no obedience unto God but that which moves according to his direction; it must in every motion eye his command on the one hand, and his promise, whether of assistance for it or acceptance in it, on the other. Saith David, "I have respect unto all thy commandments," Ps. cxix. 6; and saith the apostle, "Having these promises, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God," 2 Cor. vii. 1.

(3.) The principal *end* of it, which is the *glory of God* as a rewarder; for "he that cometh unto God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him," Heb. xi. 6.

[1] Owen refers to the expression in the original, Εἰς ὑπακοὴν πίστεως.—Ed.

The end of legal obedience was the glory of God as a rewarder according to merit in strict justice. The end of gospel obedience is the glory of God as a rewarder according to bounty, free grace, and mercy; under which consideration, neither needs the obedience rewardable to be commensurate to the reward, nor is the reward procured by that obedience. If it were, then it were of works, and not of grace, as the apostle tells us, Rom. iv. 4. So that the end of our obedience is to exalt God as a rewarder; yet that being as a rewarder of grace and bounty, the use of our obedience is not to procure that reward (for that were to work, and to have a reward reckoned to us of debt, and not of grace), but only to make the Lord gracious, and to exalt him in our present subjection and in his future gift of grace, in nature of a free, bounteous reward. This, I say, is that gospel obedience which, by the doctrine insisted on, is promoted in the souls of believers.

Secondly, This being so, as was said, the gospel obedience whereof we speak, it is evident what *principle* it proceedeth from. Whereas there are two contrary principles in every regenerate man, as shall more fully afterward be declared, called in the Scripture "flesh and Spirit, the old and new man, indwelling sin and grace," which have both of them their seats and places in all and the same faculties of the soul, it is most evident that this obedience flows solely and merely from the latter principle, the Spirit, the new or inner man, the new creature which is wrought in believers. The strengthening and heightening of this principle the Holy Ghost lays at the bottom of the renewal and increase of gospel obedience. Eph. iii. 16–19, "I pray," saith the apostle, "that God would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man; that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God." Their "strengthening with might by the Spirit in the inner man" is the foundation of their acting of and increasing in faith, love, knowledge, and assurance unto all the fulness of God. It is the "new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness," that carries men out unto all acceptable obedience, as chap. iv. 24, of the same epistle. Look, whatsoever influences the other principle of the flesh hath into our obedience, so far it is defiled: for "that which is born of the flesh is flesh," John iii. 6, and all the fruits of it are abominable; hence are all the pollutions that cleave to our holy things. Yea, if at any time poor and mere selfish considerations do put men upon duties of obedience and abstaining from sin, as fear of vengeance and destruction, and the like (which is made almost the only

motive to obedience by the doctrine of the saints' apostasy), their obedience in doing or abstaining is but as their fear of the Lord who were taught it by lions, and abominable unto him, 2 Kings xvii. 25, 32–34. This, then, being the nature of gospel obedience, and this the principle from whence it flows, it is evident,—

Thirdly, What are those *motives* which are suited to the promotion and carrying of it on in the hearts of believers; and what doctrines have an eminent and singular tendency thereunto is also to be considered. Now, these must all of them be such as are suited to the cherishing of that principle of the new or inner man in the heart, to the nourishing and strengthening of the new creature; such as are apt to ingenerate faith and love in the heart unto God; such as reveal and discover those things in his nature, mind, and will, which are apt to endear and draw out the heart to him in communion. Discouraging, perplexing doctrines do but ill *manure* the soil from whence the fruits of obedience are to spring and grow. Look, then, I say, whatsoever gospel truth is of eminent usefulness to warm, foment, stir up, and quicken, the principle of grace in the heart, to draw out, increase, and cherish faith and love, that doctrine lies in a direct, immediate tendency to the promotion of holiness, godliness, and gospel obedience. Yea, and whereas to the carrying on of that course of obedience, it is necessary that the contrary principle unto it, which we mentioned before, be daily subdued, brought under, crucified, and mortified; there are no doctrines whatsoever that are of such and so direct and eminent a serviceableness to that end and purpose as those which inwrap such discoveries of God and his good-will in Christ as are fitted for the improvement also of the principle of grace in us. Hence the work of mortification in the Scripture is everywhere assigned peculiarly to the cross and death of Christ,—his love manifested therein, and his Spirit flowing therefrom. The doctrine of the law, indeed, humbles the soul *for* Christ; but it is the doctrine of the gospel that humbles the soul *in* Christ.[1] It is "the grace of God that hath appeared, that teacheth us effectually to deny all ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world," Tit. ii. 11, 12. He that will but with a little heed read chap. vi. to the Romans will know from whence mortification flows: which truly, by the way, makes me admire at the extreme darkness and blindness of some poor men who have of late undertaken to give directions for devotion and walking with God; who, indeed, suitably to the most of the rest of their discourses,—all manifesting an "ignorance of the righteousness of God," Rom. x. 4, and a zealous endeavour to establish their own,—coming to propose ways and means for the mortifying of any sin or lust, tell you stories of biting the tongue, thrusting needles under the nails,

[1] Rom. vi. 2–6, viii. 13, 2 Cor. v. 15; Rom. vii. 7; Gal. iii. 23.

with such like trash as might have befitted popish devotions five hundred years ago. Were not men utterly ignorant what it is to "know the Lord Jesus Christ, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, and to be made conformable to his death," they could never feed on such husks themselves, nor make provision of them for those whose good they pretend to seek, Phil. iii. 10; Gal. vi. 14. Unto what hath been spoken add,—

Fourthly, Who are the *persons* that are to be provoked to holiness and godliness by the doctrine insisted on. Now, they are such as do *believe* it, and are concerned in it. We say, the truth under consideration is of an excellent usefulness to further gospel obedience in the hearts of believers and saints of God, who are taught of God not to turn the doctrine of grace into wantonness. What use, or abuse rather, men of corrupt minds and carnal principles, who stumble at Jesus Christ, and abuse the whole doctrine of the gospel by their prejudices and presumptions, will make of it, we know not, nor are solicitous. "If the gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost," 2 Cor. iv. 3, 4. It is sufficient that the food be good and wholesome for them for whom it is provided. If some will come and steal it that have no right to it, and it prove, through their own distempers, gravel in their mouths or poison in their bowels, they must blame themselves and their own wormwood lusts, and not the doctrine which they do receive, 2 Cor. ii. 16. It is provided for them that fear God, and love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity, not for dogs, swine,—unbelievers. We shall not marvel if they trample on this pearl, and rend them that bring it. To such as these, then, I say, the doctrine of the perseverance of the saints, or the stability or unchangeableness of the love of God unto believers, and of their continuation in faith and obedience, is full of exceeding effectual motives and provocations unto holiness, in all manner of gospel obedience and holy conversation, exceedingly advantaging the souls of men in a course thereof. Now, the influence it hath into the obedience of the saints floweth from it upon a twofold account:—By *removing all discouragements* whatsoever that are apt either to turn them aside from their obedience, or to render their obedience servile, slavish, or unacceptable to God; it sets them, through Christ, at perfect liberty thereunto. [And] by *putting unconquerable and indissoluble obligations upon them* to live unto God and to the praise of his glorious grace; and evidently draws them forth unto the obedience required.

1. It removeth and taketh out of the way all *discouragements* whatsoever, all things which are apt to interpose to the weakening of their faith in God or their love to God; which, as hath been said, are at the bottom of all obedience and holiness that is acceptable to God in Christ. Now, these may all be referred unto two heads:—(1.) Of perplexing, anxious *fears*, which are apt to impair and weaken

the faith of the saints. (2.) Of *hard thoughts* of God, which assault and shake their love.

(1.) That slavish, perplexing, troublesome *fears* are contrary to the free and ingenuous state of children, whereunto the saints are admitted, and (however sometimes, yea, oftentimes, they are at the bottom, and are the occasion of burdensome, servile, and superstitious obedience) impairers of their faith, I suppose I need not labour to prove. That kind of fear whereof we speak (of which more afterward) is the greatest traitor that lurks in the soul. To "fear the LORD and his goodness" is the soul's keeper, Hos. iii. 5; but this servile, perplexing fear is the betrayer of it in all its ways, and that which sours all its duties,—a thing which the Lord sets himself against, in rebukes, reproofs, dehortations, as much as any failing and miscarriage in his saints whatever. It is the opposite of faith; hence the "fearful and unbelieving" are put together in their exclusion from the New Jerusalem, Rev. xx. 8. It is that which is direct contrary to that which the apostle adviseth the saints unto, Heb. x. 19–22. It is that which mixeth faith with staggering, Rom. iv. 20, prayer with wavering, making it ineffectual, James i. 6, 7.

Let us now suppose a man to have attained some assurance of the love of God, and, "justified by faith," to have "peace with him"[1] (which, as to his present condition, the adversaries of the doctrine of perseverance acknowledge that he may attain, though how, upon their principles, I understand not); consider a little how he can safeguard his *peace* for a moment, and deliver himself from perplexing thoughts and fears, renouncing any interest in the engagement of the love and faithfulness of God for his preservation. He may say within himself, "I am for the present in some good state and condition; but were not the angels so that are now devils in hell? were not they in a far better and more excellent state than I am? and yet they are now shut up under chains of everlasting darkness to the judgment of the great day. Adam in paradise had no lust within him to tempt and seduce him, no world under the curse to entangle and provoke him, and yet, 'being in that honour, he had no understanding, he abode not,' but 'became like the beasts that perish.' Was it not in their power to persevere in that condition if they would? Did they want any means that were useful thereunto? And what hope is there left to me, in whom there 'dwelleth no good thing, who am sold under' the power of 'sin,'[2] and encompassed with a world of temptations, that I shall endure unto the end? I see thousands before mine eyes, partakers of the same heavenly calling with myself, of the same grace in Jesus Christ, every day falling into irrevocable perdition. There is not any promise of God that I should be preserved, no promise that I shall never depart

[1] Rom. v. 1. [2] Rom. vii. 14, 18.

from him, no prayer of Christ that my faith may not fail, but I am rolled upon mine own hands; and what will be the end of this whole undertaking of mine in the ways of God I know not." Let, I say, a man be exercised with such thoughts as these, and then try if any thing under heaven can bring his soul to any possible composure, until it be "cast into the mould of that doctrine which hath been delivered." But of this more directly afterward, when we come to treat of the consolation which from the breasts of it doth flow.

(2.) It is exceedingly suited to the deliverance of the souls of the saints from all such *hard thoughts* of God as are apt to impair and weaken their love towards him and delight in him; so setting the two principles of all their obedience, faith and love, at liberty, and free from their entanglements, to act in the duties they are called unto. He that had hard thoughts of his absent lord as an austere man, though he was not excused in his disobedience by it, yet was evidently discouraged as to his obedience. When men shall be taught that God takes no more care of his children in his family, but that the devil may enter in among them and take them away, making them children of hell, when he might with the greatest advantage of glory and honour to himself imaginable prevent it; that the Lord Jesus Christ, "the great shepherd of the sheep," takes no more care of his flock and fold, but that the lion, bears, and wolves, may enter in, and make havoc, and spoil at their pleasure;—may they not think that God is little concerned in the salvation of his, and that all that which is so gloriously expressed of his peculiar and special love carries nothing but an empty noise, the burden of their preservation being thrown solely upon their own shoulders? And are not such thoughts fit only to cast water upon their flames of love to God, and insensibly to weaken that delight which they ought always to take in the riches of his grace and love? Is there any thing possible more endearing to the heart of a creature than to hear such a testimony as that, Zeph. iii. 17, concerning the stability of the love of God, and its excellency, "The LORD thy God in the midst of thee is mighty; he will save, he will rejoice over thee with joy; he will rest in his love, he will joy over thee with singing?" God's resting in his love towards his saints fixes their souls in their love to him.

2. It puts high and unspeakable *obligations* on the saints to live to God, and to "perfect holiness in the fear of God." Saints we suppose to have their birth from above, to be begotten of the will of God, through the immortal seed of the word, and to be quickened with a noble, child-like ingenuity, befitting the family of God; neither is there any thing more injurious to the work of God's grace than to suppose that those whom God calls "children, friends, heirs of heaven and glory, his crown, his diadem, brethren of his only Son," are to be dealt withal, or that God deals with them, as if they were

wholly acted by a servile, slavish principle, and were wholly under the power of such an unworthy disposition.

There are two things usually spoken to the prejudice and disadvantage of the truth we have under consideration, much insisted on by Mr Goodwin, chap. ix.; as,—

(1.) "That a persuasion of the certain continuance of the love of God to any one is a ready way to make them careless, negligent, and to give up themselves to all manner of abominations."

But what vipers, snakes, and adders, do such men suppose the saints of God to be, that their new nature, their heavenly principles (for what the flesh in them is prone unto we now consider not), should conclude that it is good to sin "that grace may abound;" that because God "loves them with an everlasting love," therefore they will hate him with a perpetual hatred; that because he will assuredly give them "grace to serve him with reverence and godly fear," therefore they will despise him and trample on all his goodness; that because he will "never forsake them," they will no more abide with him? What is in the inner man, what is in the new creature, what is in the nature of any grace wherewith they are endowed, that is apt or inclinable to make such hellish conclusions? If we hear of any such thing among the sons of men,—if we see a child or a servant resolving to be profligate, wicked, stubborn, prodigal, because his father or master is kind, loving, and will not disinherit him or put him away,—we look upon him as a monster in nature, and think that it would be good service to the interest of mankind to take him off from the face of earth; and yet such monsters are all the saints of God supposed to be, who, if their Father once give them the least assurance of the continuance of his love, they presently resolve to do him all the dishonour, despite, and mischief they can! I appeal to all the experience of all the saints in the world whether, if any such thought at any time arise in them, that they may "continue in sin because grace hath abounded," that they may live in all filth and folly because God hath promised never to forsake them nor turn away his love from them, they do not look upon it as a hellish abuse of the love of God, which they labour to crucify no less than any other work of the flesh whatsoever. Presuppose, indeed, the saints of God to be dogs and swine, wholly sensual and unregenerate, that is, no saints, and our doctrine to be such, that God will love them and save them continuing in that state wherein they are, and you make a bed for iniquity to stretch itself upon; but suppose that we teach that the "wrath of God" will certainly come upon the "children of disobedience," that "he that believeth not shall be damned," and that God will keep his own "by his power through faith unto salvation," and that, in and by the use of means, they shall certainly be preserved to the end, and the mouth of iniquity will be stopped.

(2.) They say, "It takes away that strong curb and bridle which ought to be kept in the mouth of the flesh, to keep it from running headlong into sin and folly,—namely, the fear of hell and punishment, which alone hath an influence upon it to bring it to subjection and under obedience."

But now, if there be nothing in the world that is of use for the mortification and crucifying of the flesh and the lusts thereof but it receives improvement by this doctrine, this crimination must of necessity vanish into nothing.

(1.) Then, it tells us that the flesh and all the deeds thereof are to be crucified and slain, God having ordained good works for us to walk in; that for the works of the flesh, the wrath of God cometh upon the children of disobedience; and if any say, "Let us continue in sin, because we are not under the law, or the condemning power of it for sin, but under grace," it cries out, "God forbid!" Rom. vi. 14, 15, and saith, this is argument enough and proof sufficient that sin shall not have dominion over us, "because we are not under the law, but under grace." It tells you, also, that there is a twofold fear of hell and punishment of sin;—first, Of *anxiety* and doubtfulness in respect of the end; secondly, Of *care* and diligence that respecteth the means.

And for the first, it saith that this is the portion of very many of the saints of God, of some all their days. Though they are so, yet they know not that they are so; and therefore are under anxious and doubtful fears of hell and punishment, notwithstanding that they are in the arms of their Father, from whence, indeed, they shall not be cast down;—as a man bound with chains on the top of a tower cannot but fear, and yet he cannot fall. He cannot fall, because he is fast bound with strong chains; he cannot but fear, because he cannot actually and clearly consider oftentimes the means of his preservation.

And for the latter, a fear of the ways and means leading to punishment, as such, that continues upon all the saints of God in this life; neither is there any thing in this doctrine that is suited to a removal thereof. And this, it says, is more, much more of use for the mortification of the flesh than the former.

(2.) It says that the great and principal means of mortification of the flesh is not fear of hell and punishment, but the Spirit of Christ, as the apostle tells us, Rom. viii. 13, "If ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live." It is the Spirit of Christ alone that is able to do this great work. We know what bondage and religious drudgery some have put themselves unto upon this account, and yet could never in their lives attain to the mortification of any one sin. It is the Spirit of Christ alone that hath sovereign power in our souls of killing and making alive. As no man quickeneth his own soul, so no man upon any consideration whatsoever, or

by the power of any threatenings of the law, can kill his own sin. There was never any one sin truly mortified by the law or the threatening of it. All that the law can do of itself is but to entangle sin, and thereby to irritate and provoke it, like a bull in a net, or a beast led to the slaughter. It is the Spirit of Christ in the gospel that cuts its throat and destroys it. Now, this doctrine was never in the least charged with denying the Spirit of God to believers; which whilst it doth grant and maintain in a way of opposition to that late opinion which advanceth itself against it, it maintains the mortification of the flesh and the lusts thereof upon the only true and unshaken foundation.

(3.) It tells you that the great means whereby the Spirit of Christ worketh the mortification of the flesh and the lusts thereof is the application of the cross of Christ, and his death and love therein, unto the soul, and says that those vain endeavours which some promote and encourage for the mortification of sin, consisting, for the most part, in slavish, bodily exercises, are to be bewailed with tears of blood as abominations that seduce poor souls from the cross of Christ; for it says this work is only truly and in an acceptable manner performed when we are "planted into the likeness of the death of Christ, having our old man crucified with him, and the body of sin destroyed," Rom. vi. 5, 6, and thereupon by faith "reckoning ourselves dead unto sin, but alive unto God," verse 11. It is done only by "knowing the fellowship of the sufferings of Christ, and being made conformable to his death," Phil. iii. 10. "By the cross of Christ is the world crucified unto us, and we unto the world," Gal. vi. 14. The Spirit brings home the power of the cross of Christ to the soul for the accomplishing of this work, and without it it will not be done. Moreover, it says that, by the way of motive to this duty, there is nothing comes with that efficacy upon the soul as the love of Christ in his death; as the apostle assures us, 2 Cor. v. 14, 15, "For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead: and that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again." Now, it was never laid to the charge of this doctrine that it took off from the virtue of the death and cross of Christ, but rather, on the contrary, though falsely, that it ascribed too much thereunto; so that, these importune exceptions notwithstanding, the doctrine in hand doth not only maintain its own innocency as to any tendency unto looseness, but also manifestly declareth its own usefulness to all ends and purposes of gospel obedience whatsoever: for,—

(4.) It stirs up, provokes, and draws out into action, every thing that is free, noble, ingenuous, filial, and of a heavenly descent, in the saints of God. Thus,—

[1.] It strengthens their *faith* in God and in Jesus Christ; which is the bottom of all acceptable obedience whatsoever, all that which proceedeth from any other root being but a product of labouring in the fire, which in the end will consume both root and branch. That which prevails upon and draws out the soul to faith and believing, I mean as it is peculiar to the gospel and justifying,—that is, as it is in God as a Father, and in the Lord Christ as a Mediator,—is the discovery of the good-will of God to the soul in Christ, and his design to advance his glory thereby. I speak not of the formal cause of faith in general, but of the peculiar motive to faith and believing in the sense before mentioned. So our Saviour giving the command in general to his disciples, John xiv. 1, "Ye believe in God, believe also in me," in the whole ensuing chapter provokes them to it with gracious discoveries of the good-will of God,—his Father's and his own good-will towards them. And, indeed, propose what other considerations ye will, provoke the soul by all the fear and dread of hell, and the most dismal representation of the wrath to come, until it be convinced of this, it will never take one step towards God in Christ. Now, "our adversaries themselves being judges," the doctrine we have had under consideration abounds above all others with the discoveries of the good-will and kindness of God to poor sinners; yea, the great crime that is laid to the charge of it is that it extends it too far. It doth not only assert that God freely "begins the good work in them," but that he will also powerfully "perfect it to the day of Jesus Christ." It assures the souls of the poor saints of God that he who "looked upon them in their blood, and said unto them Live, when no eye pitied them, who quickened them when they were dead in trespasses and in sins, begetting them of his own will by the word of truth, that they should be a kind of first-fruits to himself, washing them in the blood of his Son," and delivering them from the old tyrant Satan,—that he will not now leave them to themselves and to the counsel of their own hands, to stand or fall according as they shall of themselves and by themselves be able to withstand opposition and seduction; but that he will keep them in his own hand, giving them such constant supplies of his grace and Spirit as that, in the use of means, they shall wait upon him to the end; and that howsoever or whensoever, by the power of temptation and surprisals of corruptions, they are carried aside from him, he will "heal their backslidings, and love them freely," and though they change every day, yet "he changeth not, and therefore they are not consumed." And hereby, I say, it confirms and strengthens their faith in God as a Father in Jesus Christ, taking everlasting care of them.

[2.] Of their *love* there is the same reason. God's love to us is of his free grace; he loves us because so it seems good to him. Our

love to him is purely ingenerated by his love to us, and carried on and increased by farther revelations of his desirableness and excellency to our souls: "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us" first. There is no creature in the least guilty of sin that can put forth any acceptable act of love towards God, but what is purely drawn out upon the apprehension of his love and loveliness in his grace and mercy. A man, I confess, may love God when he hath no sense of his love to him in particular; but it must all be built upon an apprehension of his love to sinners, though he may come short in the application. It is the "terror of the Lord" that causes us to "persuade" others, but it is the "love of Christ that constraineth us" to live to him. She loved much to whom much was forgiven. Look, then, the more abundant discoveries are made of the loveliness and desirableness [of God] in the riches of his grace, the more effectual is the sole and only motive we have to love him with that filial, chaste, holy love, that he requires.

For the love of GOD to his saints, our doctrine of their perseverance sets it forth with the greatest advantage for the endearment of their souls, to draw out their streams of love to God; especially doth it give it its glory in three things:—

1*st.* In its *freedom.* It sets forth the love of God to his saints as that which they have no way in the least deserved, as hath been manifested from Isa. xlviii. 8, 9, 11, liv. 9, 10. As he "first loved them, not because they were better than others, being by nature children of wrath, and lying in their blood, when he said to them Live, quickening them when they were dead in trespasses and sins;" so he doth not continue his love to them, nor purpose so to do, because he foresees that they will so and so walk with him in holiness and uprightness (for he foresees no such thing in them, but what he himself purposeth effectually to work upon the account of his loving them), but he resolves to do it merely upon the account of his own grace. He neither resolves to continue his love to them on condition that they be so and so holy, at random, and with uncertainty of the event, but freely, that they may and shall be so. And this is the glory of love, the most orient pearl in the crown of it, Eph. i. 4. It is not mercenary, nor self-ended, nor deserved; but, as a spring and fountain, freely vents and pours out itself upon its own account. And what ingenuous, truly noble, heavenly-descended heart can hold out against the power of this love? It is effectually constraining to all manner of suitable returns. Let the soul but put itself into the actual contemplation of the love of God, as it lies represented in this property of it, every way free, undeserved, the great love of God to a poor worm, a sinner, a nothing, and it cannot but be wrought to a serious admiration of it, and delight in it, and be pained and straitened, until it make some suitable returns

of love and obedience unto God; if not, it may well doubt it never tasted of that love or enjoyed any fruits of it.

2*dly.* It gives the love of God the glory of its *constancy* and *unchangeableness.* This is another star of an eminent magnitude in the heaven of love. It is not a fading, a wavering, an altering thing, but abides for ever; God "rests in his love," Zeph. iii. 17. It is a great thing, indeed, to apprehend that the great God should fix his love upon a poor creature, but add hereunto that he may love them one day and hate them the next, embrace them one hour and the next cast them into hell, one day rejoicing over them with joy, another rejoicing to destroy them; as it is dishonourable to God, and derogatory to all his divine excellencies and perfections, so, in particular, it clotheth his love with the most uncomely and undesirable garment that ever was put upon the affections of the meanest worm of the earth. What can ye say more contemptible of a man, more to his dishonour among all wise and knowing men, or that shall render his respects and affections more undesirable, than to say, "He is free of his love, indeed, but he abides not in it. What a world of examples have we of those who have been in his bosom and have again been cast out!" Though among men something may be pretended in excuse of this, with respect unto their ignorance, the shortness of their foresight, disability to discern between things and appearances, yet in respect of God, "before whom all things are open and naked," in whose eye all incidences and events lie as clearly stated as things that are already past and gone, what can be said of such a vain supposal for the vindication of his glory? It is said that "men change from what they were when God loved them, and therefore his love changeth also." But who first made them fit to be beloved? did not the Lord? Do they make themselves differ from others? On what account did he do it? was it not merely on the account of his own grace? Can he not as well preserve them in a state of being beloved as put them into it? And if he determined that he would not preserve them in that condition, why did he set his love upon them when himself knew that he would not continue it to them? Was it only to give his love the dishonour of a change? I say, then, the doctrine contended for gives the love of God the glory of its immutability, asserts it to be like himself, unchangeable,—that there is not, indeed, in itself the "least shadow of turning." It may be eclipsed and obscured, as to its beams and influences, for a season; but changed, turned away, it cannot be. And this consideration of it renders it to the souls of the saints inestimably precious. The very thought of it, considering that nothing else could possibly save or preserve them, is marrow to their bones and health to their souls, and makes them cry out to all that is within them to love the Lord and to live unto him.

3*dly.* It gives it the glory of its *fruitfulness.* A barren love is upon the matter no love. Love that hath no breasts, no bowels, that pities not, that assists not, deserves not that heavenly name. Will ye say she is a tender, loving, mother who can look on a languishing, perishing child, yea, see a ravenous beast, whom yet she could easily drive away, take it out of her arms and devour it before her face, and not put forth her strength for its assistance or deliverance? or will ye say she is a tiger, and a monster in nature? And shall we feign such a love in God towards his children (which is such that all the bowels of a tender parent to an only child are but as a drop to the ocean in comparison of it) as that he looks on whilst they languish and perish, fall, sink, and die away into everlasting calamity? yea, that notwithstanding it he will suffer the roaring lion to come and snatch them away out of his arms, and devour them before his face; that he will look upon them sinking into eternal separation from him, and such destruction as that it had been infinitely better for them never to have been born, without putting forth his power and the efficacy of his grace for their preservation? "O foolish people and unwise! shall we thus requite the LORD" as to render him so hard a Master, so cruel a Father to his tender ones, the lambs of his Son, washed in his blood, quickened by his Spirit, owned by him, smiled on, embraced ten thousand times, as to suffer them so to be taken out of his hands? Is there nothing in his love to cause his "bowels to move and his repentings to be kindled together" towards a poor dying child, that surely departeth not without some sad looks towards his Father? "Nemo repente fit turpissimus." Is this the kindness which he exalteth above the love of a woman to her sucking child, of a mother to the fruit of her womb? Oh that men should dare thus foolishly to charge the Almighty, to ascribe such a barren, fruitless love to him who is *love*, towards his children, who are as the apple of his eye, his dear and tender ones, as would be a perpetual blot and stain to any earthly parent to have righteously ascribed to him! I say, then, our doctrine gives the love of God the glory of its fruitfulness. It asserts it to be such a fountain-love as from whence continually streams of grace, kindness, mercy, and refreshment do flow: "Because he loveth us with everlasting love, therefore with loving-kindness he draweth us," Jer. xxxi. 3. From that love proceed continual supplies of the Spirit and grace by which those of whom it is said they "abide" are preserved lovely and fit by him to be beloved. It tells us that because God "loveth his people," therefore are they "in his hand," Deut. xxxiii. 3. It declares it to be such a love as is the womb of all mercy, whence pardon, healing, recovery from wounds, sicknesses, and dying pangs, do continually flow; a love upon the account whereof the persons loved may make conclusion that they shall lack nothing, Ps. xxiii. 1; a love whose

fruitfulness is subservient to its own constancy, preserving the saints such as he may rest in it unchangeably, Rom. viii. 29, 30; a love whereby God "sings to his vineyard, watches over it, and waters it every moment," Isa. xxvii. 2, 3. And now, what flint almost in the rock of stone would not be softened and dissolved by this love? When we shall think that it is from the love of God that our wasted portion hath been so often renewed, that our dying graces have been so often quickened, our dreadful backslidings so often healed, our breaches and decays so often repaired, and the pardon of our innumerable transgressions so often sealed, unless we suck the breasts of tigers, and have nothing in us but the nature of wolves and unclean beasts, can we hold out against the sweet, gracious, powerful, effectual influence that it will have upon our souls? Thus, I say, doth the doctrine which we have in hand set out the love of God unto us in its eminent endearing properties, wherein, he being embraced through Christ, a foundation is laid, and eminent promotion given unto the holiness and obedience which he requireth of us.

This doctrine renders JESUS CHRIST lovely to our souls, to the souls of believers. It represents him to them as the "standard-bearer[1] to ten thousand," as one "altogether lovely," as exceeding desirable in the work of his oblation, and lovely and amiable in the work of his intercession, as hath been manifested.

1*st.* [As for his oblation], it imports him as one who, in his death, hath *made an end of the controversy* between God and our souls, Dan. ix. 24, becoming "our peace," Eph. ii. 14, "having obtained for us eternal redemption," Heb. ix. 12; that he hath not suffered all that sorrow, anguish, pain, torment, dereliction, whereunto for our sakes he was given up, and willingly exposed himself, for an uncertain end, not fighting in his death as one beating the air, nor leaving his work in the dust, to be trampled on or taken up as it seems good to us, in our polluted, dark, dead estate of nature; but hath filled it with such immortal seed, that of itself, by itself, and its own unconquerable efficacy, it hath sprung up to the bringing forth of the whole fruit intended in it, and the accomplishment of all the ends aimed at by it;—that is, that it shall certainly and infallibly bring all those to God for whom he offered himself, by justifying, sanctifying, and preserving them, through the communication of his own Spirit and grace to them for that end and purpose, "all his promises being yea and amen in him," confirmed by his death, 2 Cor. i. 20; Heb. x. 12–17. Some of those who abuse the truth we have insisted on indeed pretend to grant "That by his death he made satisfaction for sin, but only on condition that men believe on him, and continue so doing; that they shall so believe, and so continue" (though he is said to be the "captain of our salvation," and the "author and finisher of our faith," though it

[1] So some render דֶּגֶל, Cant. v. 10.—ED.

be "given unto us for his sake to believe on him," and we are "blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in him"), *that* he takes no care about beyond the general administration of outward means. He neither procured any such thing by his oblation, nor doth intercede for it. These things are left unto men, to be educed, drawn forth, and exercised, by virtue of sundry considerations that they may take upon themselves." Never, doubtless, did men take more pains to stain the beauty and comeliness of our dying Saviour.

2*dly*. [As] for his intercession, the doctrine hitherto insisted on *renders him therein exceeding lovely and desirable*. It tells you that he doth " pray the Father," who thereupon " sendeth us the Comforter," the Holy Spirit, for all the gracious acts and works, ends and purposes, before mentioned, with innumerable other privileges that the saints by him are made partakers of, and that to "abide with us for ever," never to leave us nor forsake us; that he continually "appears in the presence of God for us," interceding that our faith may not fail, pleading for us in and under all our decays, making out to us suitable supplies in all our distresses, temptations, trials, troubles, taking care that "no temptation befall us," but that " a way also of escape be given to us together with it;"—it tells us his eye, even now he is in glory, is still upon us, seeing our wants, taking notice of our weakness, and providing for us, as his only concernment in the world, that we be not lost; that he hath not left one jot of that kindness which he bare to his flock, his lambs, his little ones, but pursues with all his strength, and all the interest he hath in heaven, the work of their salvation, which he came from his Father's bosom to enter on, and returned to him again to carry on unto perfection; that, as the high priest of old, he bears our names on his breast and on his shoulders continually before his Father: so that in all our falls and failings, when we are in ourselves helpless and hopeless, when there is nothing in us nor about us that can do us any good, or yield us any help or consolation, yet on this account we may say, " 'The LORD is our shepherd, we shall not want:' he hath undertaken for us, and will bear us in his arms, until he bring us to the bosom of his Father."

Now, whether such considerations as these, of the oblation and intercession of Christ, do not fill his love in them with a more constraining efficacy, and more draw out the hearts of the saints unto faith and love, than any instruction can do informing men of the uselessness of the one or other of these eminent acts of his mediation for any of the ends and purposes mentioned, let believers judge. That which men repose upon in their greatest necessities, and for the things of the greatest concernment, thereof they have the greatest valuation, and the thoughts of it are most fixed in their minds. What is there of so great concernment in this world unto the saints as their abiding with God unto the end? How many,

how great, urging, pressing, are the difficulties, dangers, troubles, they meet withal in their so doing! What, then, they have most frequent recourse unto, and what they rest most upon under their pressures, in the things of that concernment before mentioned, *that* will deserve the name of their treasure, where their hearts will and ought to be. Now, if this (setting aside, as things of no consideration in such a case, the purposes, covenant, and promises of God, the oblation and intercession of the Lord Christ) be men's own rational abilities to consider what is for their good, and what will be hurtful and destructive to them, what can hinder but that men will, yea, and that they often should, spend the flower and best of their affections upon and about themselves and their own wisdom in and for their preservation?—that doubtless will take up their hearts and thoughts, so that there will be very little room left for the entertainment of the Lord Jesus Christ with any regard or respect on this account. If that, then, may pass which was formerly laid down,—namely, that the doctrines and things which are apt and suited to the ingenerating, quickening, increasing, and building up, of faith and love towards God and our Lord Jesus Christ, are the most eminent gospel motives to spiritual, acceptable obedience (as it is an unquestionable truth and certainty), —doubtless that doctrine which represents the Father and Son so rich in mercy, so loving and lovely to the soul, as that doth which we insist upon, must needs have a most effectual influence into that obedience.

(5.) The doctrine insisted on hath an effectual influence into the obedience of the saints, upon the account of giving it its proper place, and setting it aright upon its basis, carrying it on in due order. It neither puts upon it the fetters of the law, nor turns it loose from the holy and righteous rule of it. Let men be as industrious as can be imagined in the performance of all commanded duties, yet if they do it on legal motives and for legal ends, all their performances are vitiated, and all their duties rejected. This the apostle asserts against the Jews, Rom. ix. 31, 32, "They sought for righteousness, but as it were by the works of the law;" and therefore he tells them, chap. x. 3, that "being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, they did not submit to the righteousness of God." And the Papists will one day find a fire proceeding out of their doctrine of merits, consuming all their good works as "hay and stubble." There are also many other ways and principles whereby obedience is vitiated, and rendered an abomination instead of sacrifice, wherein our doctrine is no sharer; but this I must not enter into, because it would lead me into other controversies, which with this I shall not intermix.

(6.) It naturally and sweetly mixeth with all the ordinances of Christ instituted for the end under consideration; in particular, with that great ordinance, the ministry of the gospel, in reference to

the great fruit and effect of it mentioned Eph. iv. 12, 13, "The perfecting of the saints, the edifying of the body of Christ: till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ." That which the Lord Jesus aimed at and intended principally in giving pastors and teachers to his church was, that they might carry on the work of the ministry for the perfecting of the saints, and their filling up the measure allotted unto them; and this they do by revealing the whole counsel of God unto them, keeping back nothing that is profitable for them; as was the practice of Paul, Acts xx. 20, 27. Of this counsel or will of God, as by them managed, there are two parts:—

[1.] The discovery of God and his will to them, as to the state and condition whereunto he calls them, and which he requires them to come up unto; and this consists in doctrines revealing God and his will, which contain rules and precepts for men to walk by and yield obedience unto.

[2.] That which is suited to the carrying on of men in the state and condition whereunto they are called, according to the mind of God, as also to prevail with them to whom the word doth come to enter into the state of obedience and walking with God; and this is usually branched into three general heads, of promises, exhortations, and threatenings. The management of these aright with power and efficacy, with evidence and demonstration of the Spirit, is no small part, yea, it is the greatest part, of the work of the ministry, the greatest portion of what is doctrinal in the word or book of God relating to these heads. And of this part of that ordinance of Christ, the "ministry of the word," the pressing of men into a state of obedience and to a progress in that estate, by promises, exhortations, and threatenings, I shall briefly speak, either by way of demonstration and proof of what lieth before me, or in vindication of what is affirmed in the same kind from the objections and exceptions of him in particular with whom I have to do; aiming still at my former assertion, that the doctrine I have insisted on naturally and clearly closeth with those promises and exhortations, to help on their efficacy and energy for the accomplishment of the work intended.

1*st.* For the first, let us take a taste of the *promises*, which are, as it were, the very life and beauty of the covenant of grace, and the glory of the ministry committed unto men; and they are of two sorts, both of which have their effectual influence into the obedience of saints:—

(1*st.*) There are promises which express only the work of God's grace, and what he will freely do in and upon the hearts of his thereby, as to the working holiness and obedience in them, as also of his pardoning mercy in his free acceptance of them in Jesus Christ; and these are in a peculiar manner those "better promises"

of the covenant of grace, upon the account whereof it is so exceedingly exalted above that of works, which by sin was broken and disannulled, Heb. viii. 6–12.

(*2dly.*) There are promises of what good and great things God will farther do unto and for them who obey him; as, that he will keep them and preserve them that they shall not be lost, that their labour and obedience shall end in the enjoyment of God himself, with an immortal crown of glory which shall never fade away, Heb. xi. 9, 10.

Now, the doctrine of the saints' perseverance, and the stability of the love of God unto them, closeth with the promises of both these sorts, as to the end of carrying on and increasing obedience and holiness in them. Take an instance in the first. The promises of the work of God's grace in us and towards us are effectual as appointed to this end: so in that great word, Gen. xvii. 1, (which the apostle calls "The promise," Gal. iii. 17,) "I am the Almighty God;"—"I am so, and will be so to thee, and that for and to all ends and purposes of the covenant whatsoever." The inference is, "Walk before me, and be thou perfect." Walking with God in uprightness and sincerity is the proper fruit in us of his promise to be our all-sufficient God in covenant; as, Jer. xxxi. 33, our becoming the "people of God" in walking with him in all ways of obedience is the effect of his promise "to be our God, and to write his law in our hearts," not only because by the grace of the promise we are brought into a state of acceptance, and made the people of God, but also upon the account of the engagement that is put upon us by that gracious promise to live unto him; whence in the close it is affirmed "we shall be his people." The word of the gospel, or the word of faith, doth mainly consist in this; and what the aim of that is the apostle declares, Tit. ii. 11, 12, "The grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world." Which general purport of the promises in this way is farther asserted, 2 Cor. vii. 1, "Having," saith he, "these promises, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God." And most eminently is this assigned to the promises of that sort which we now peculiarly insist upon, 2 Pet. i. 3, 4. To know the way whereby these or any other promises are effectual to the end and purpose intimated, two things are considerable:—*First*, What is required to make them so effectual; *Secondly*, Wherein and how they do exert that efficacy that is in them. For the *first*, the apostle acquaints us on what account alone it is that they come to be useful in this or any other kind: Heb. iv. 2, "The word of the gospel," the promise preached to them of old, "did not profit them," did them no good at all. And the reason of this sad success in the preaching of the gospel and declaration of the promises he gives

you in the same verse; it is that the word was "not mixed with faith in them that heard it." It is the mixing of the promises with faith that renders them useful and profitable. Now, to whatever faith is required, the more firm, strong, and stable it is, the more effectual and useful it is. That, then, which is apt to establish faith, to support and strengthen it, to preserve it from staggering, *that* renders the promise most useful and effectual for the accomplishment of any work whereunto it is designed, Rom. iv. 20. Now, faith in the promises respects the accomplishment of the things promised, as the apostle tells us in that commended and never-enough-imitated example of the faith of Abraham: Rom. iv. 19–21, "Being not weak in faith, he considered not his own body now dead, when he was about an hundred years old, neither yet the deadness of Sarah's womb: he staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; and being fully persuaded that what he had promised he was able also to perform." Laying aside all considerations that might tend to the impairing of his confidence, he firmly believed that it should be to him as God had promised. That the doctrine we insist on is clearly conducing to the establishing of faith in the promises cannot tolerably be called into question. Whatsoever is in those promises, whatsoever considerations or concernments of Him whose they are, as his faithfulness, unchangeableness, and omnipotency, that are apt to strengthen faith in them, it preserves entire and exalteth. It is a wild assertion, which men scarce search their own hearts (if, indeed, men know what belongs to believing in sincerity) when they make, that the efficacy of the promises unto our obedience should arise from hence, that the things promised may not be fulfilled, and that the weakness of faith (and every such supposal doth at least weaken it, yea, and tends to its subversion) should render the promise useful, which hath no use at all but as it is "mixed with faith." For instance, the promise that God will be an all-sufficient God unto us, that he will "circumcise our hearts and write his law in them, that we shall fear him," is, as was manifested before, a useful meditation for the ingenerating and quickening of obedience and holiness in us. That it may be such a means, it is required that it be "mixed with faith in them that hear it," as was declared. According as faith is strong or weak, so will its usefulness be. I ask, then, whether this be a proper way to set this promise on work for the end proposed, namely, to persuade them that should believe it that all this may be otherwise,—God may cease to be their God, their hearts may not be circumcised, nor the law mentioned written in them? Is this the way to strengthen their faith and to keep them from staggering? or rather, to subvert and cast down all their confidence to the ground? The doctrine we have under considera-

tion continually sounds in the ears of believers that "God is faithful" in all his promises, 1 Cor. i. 9; that he can, that he will, make them good; that his own excellencies, his own perfections, require no less at his hands. And this it doth, not on any grounds that carry any thing with them that may seem to incline to the least neglect of God, or contempt of any property, excellency, or word of his, and so be apt to breed presumption, and not faith, but on such only as give him the glory of all that he hath revealed of himself unto us. And therefore its genuine tendency must be to beget and increase precious and saving faith in the hearts of men; which we conceive to lie in a more direct way of efficacy towards holiness and obedience than the ingenerating of servile fears gendering unto bondage can do.

This, then, we have obtained:—first, That the promises peculiarly insisted on are motives to and furtherances of obedience; secondly, That the way whereby they become so is by being mixed with faith, and the stronger faith is, the more effectual will the working of those promises unto holiness be; thirdly, That the doctrine of the perseverance of the saints, and stability of God's love to them, giving him the glory of all his excellencies, which in his promises are to be considered, is suited to the carrying on of faith in its growth and increase. Indeed, that which makes our belief of the promises of faith divine is the rise it hath and the bottom whereinto it is resolved,—namely, the excellencies of Him who makes the promises, as that he is true, faithful, all-sufficient; the glory of all which is given him in believing, as the apostle informs us, Rom. iv. 20, 21. Yea, and all this he must be believed to be in reference to the accomplishment of his promises, or we believe them not with divine, supernatural (if that term may be allowed), and saving faith. Surely they must needs think us very easy of belief, and wholly unexperienced in any communion with God, who shall suppose that we will be persuaded that the doctrine which eminently asserts and ascribes unto God the glory of all his attributes, which he would have us to eye in his promises, strengthening faith on that account, doth annihilate the promises in the word of the ministry, as to their usefulness unto our obedience. Let us deal by instance: God hath promised to "begin and perfect a good work in us." According as the promise is "mixed with faith," so it will be useful and profitable to us. If there be no faith, it will be of no use; if little, of little; if more, of more. Let a man now be supposed to be wavering about his mixing this promise with faith, whereupon the issue of its efficacy and fruitfulness, as was said, doth depend, and let the doctrine we teach be called in to speak in this case, and let us try whether what it says be prejudicial to establishment of faith, or whether it be not all that looks towards its confirmation. It says, then, unto the soul of a believer, "Why art thou so cast down, thou poor soul? and why are thy

thoughts perplexed within thee? It is true, thou art weak, unstable, ready to fall away, and to perish. Thy temptations are many, great, and prevalent, and thou hast no strength to stand against the power and multitude of them. But look a little upon Him who hath promised that thou shalt never depart from Him, who hath promised to finish the good work begun. He is unchangeable in his purposes, faithful in his promises, and will put forth the 'exceeding greatness of his power' for the accomplishment of them; so that though thou failest, he will cause thee to renew thy strength, though thou fallest, thou shalt not be cast down. He hath undertaken to work, and who shall let him? The counsel of his heart, as to the fulfilling of it, doth not depend on any thing in us. What sins thou art overtaken withal he will pardon, and will effectually supply thee with his Spirit, that thou shalt not fall into or continue in such sins as would cut off thy communion with him." And doth not this mix the forementioned promises with faith, and so render it effectual to the carrying on of the work of love and obedience, as was mentioned? And as this doctrine is suited to the establishment of the soul in believing, and to the stirring of men up to mix the promises with faith, so there is not any thing that is or can be thought more effectual to the weakening, impairing, and shattering, of the faith of the saints than that which is contrary thereunto, as shall afterward be more fully manifested. Tell a soul that God will write his law in him, and put his fear in his inward parts, that he shall never depart from him; what can ye possibly pitch upon to unsettle him as to a persuasion of the accomplishment of this promise, and that it shall be so indeed as God hath spoken, but only this: "According as thou behavest thyself (which is left unto thee), so shall this be made good or come short of accomplishment: if thou continue to walk with God (which that thou shalt do he doth not promise, but upon condition thou walk with him), it shall be well; and if thou turn aside, which thou mayst do, notwithstanding any thing here spoken or intimated, then the word spoken shall be of none effect, the promise shall not be fulfilled towards thee?" I know not what the most malicious devil in hell (if they have degrees of malice) can invent more suited to weaken the faith of men, as to the accomplishment of God's promise, than by affirming that it doth not depend upon his truth and faithfulness, but solely on their good behaviour, which he doth not effectually provide that it shall be such as is required thereunto. God himself hath long since determined this difference, might he be attended unto.

What hath been spoken of the promises of the first sort might also be manifested concerning those of the second; and the like might also be cleared up in reference to those other weapons of ministers' warfare, in casting down the strongholds of sin in the hearts of men, to wit, exhortations and threatenings. But because Mr Goodwin

hath taken great pains, both in the general, to prove the unsuitableness of our doctrine to the promotion of obedience and a holy conversation, and in particular its inconsistency with the exhortations and threatenings of the word, managed by the ordinances of the ministry, what is needful farther to be added to the purpose in hand will fall in with our vindication and rescuing of the truth from the false criminations wherewith it is assaulted and reproached as to this particular; and therefore I shall immediately address myself to the consideration of his long indictment and charge against the doctrine of the perseverance of the saints as to this very thing.

CHAPTER XI.

ARGUMENTS AGAINST THE DOCTRINE CONSIDERED.

The entrance into an answer to Mr G.'s arguments against the doctrine of the saints' perseverance—His sixth argument about the usefulness of the doctrine under consideration to the work of the ministry proposed—His proof of the minor proposition considered and answered—Many pretenders to promote godliness by false doctrines—Mr G.'s common interest in this argument—His proofs of the usefulness of his doctrine unto the promotion of godliness considered and answered—The consequence of his arguing discovered—The doctrine by him opposed mistaken, ignorantly or wilfully—Objections proposed by Mr G. to himself to be answered—The objection as proposed disowned—Certainty of the love of God, in what sense a motive to obedience—The doctrine of apostasy denies the unchangeableness of God's love to believers; placeth qualifications in the room of persons—How the doctrine of perseverance promiseth the continuance of the love of God to believers—Certainty of reward encouraging to regular action—Promises made to persons qualified, not suspended upon those qualifications—Means appointed of God for the accomplishment of a determined end certain—Means not always conditions—Mr G.'s strange inference concerning the Scripture considered—The word of God by him undervalued and subjected to the judgment of vain men as to its truth and authority—The pretended reason of the former proceeding discussed—The Scripture the sole judge of what is to be ascribed to God, and believed concerning him—The doctrine of the saints' perseverance falsely imposed on, and vindicated—Mr G.'s next objection made to himself against his doctrine—Its unseasonableness as to the argument in hand demonstrated—No assurance of the love of God, nor peace left the saints, by the doctrine of apostasy—The ground of peace and assurance by it taken away—Ground of Paul's consolation, 1 Cor. ix. 27—The meaning of the word ἀδόκιμος—Another plea against the doctrine attempted to be proved by Mr G.—That attempt considered—Not the weakness of the flesh naturally, but the strength of lust spiritually pretended—The cause of sin in the saints farther discussed—The power ascribed by Mr G. to men for the strengthening and making willing the Spirit in them considered—The aptness of the saints to perform, what and whence—The opposition they have in them thereunto—Gospel obedience, how easy—The conclusion—Answer to chap. xiii. of his book proposed.

THE argument wherein Mr Goodwin exposeth the doctrine under contest to the trial concerning its usefulness as to the promotion of

godliness in the hearts and ways of them by whom it is received, he thus proposeth, chap. xiii. sect. 32, p. 333, "That doctrine which is according to godliness, and whose natural and proper tendency is to promote godliness in the hearts and lives of men, is evangelical, and of unquestionable comportance with the truth; such is the doctrine which teacheth the possibility of the saints' declining, both totally and finally: *ergo.*"

Of this argument he goeth about to establish the respective propositions, so as to make them serviceable to the enforcement of the conclusion he aimeth at, for the exaltation of the Helena whereof he is enamoured; and as for the major proposition (about which, rightly understood, we are remote from contesting with him or any else, and will willingly and cheerfully at any time drive the cause in difference to issue upon the singular testimony of the truth wrapped up in it), he thus confirmeth it:—

"The reason of the major proposition, though the truth of it needed no light but its own to be seen by, is, because the gospel itself is a doctrine which is according unto godliness, a mystery of godliness,—is a doctrine, truth, and mystery, calculated, contrived, and framed by God with a singular aptness and choiceness of ingredients for the advancement of godliness in the world. Therefore, what particular doctrine is of the same spirit, tendency, and import, must needs be a natural branch thereof, and hath perfect accord with it. This proposition, then, is unquestionable."

Ans. According to the principles formerly laid down, I have something to say, though not to the proposition itself, as in the terms it lieth, but only as to the fixedness and staidness of it, that it may not be a nose of wax, to be turned to and fro at every one's pleasure, to serve their turns; for what sort of men is there in the world, professing the name of Christ, that do not lay claim to an interest in this proposition for the confirmation of their opinions? It is but as a common exordium in rhetoric, a useless flourish: "The doctrine which is according to godliness,"—that is, which the Scripture teacheth to be true, and to serve for the promotion of godliness (not what doctrine soever any dark, brain-sick creature doth apprehend so to do), in the state and condition wherein the saints of God walk with him,—"is a branch of the gospel." I add, "In the state and condition wherein *we* walk with God;" for in the state of innocency, the doctrine of the law, as a covenant of life, was of singular aptness and usefulness to promote obedience, which yet is not therefore any branch or part of the gospel, but opposite to it and destructive of it. All the advantage, then, Mr Goodwin can expect from this argument to his cause dependeth upon the proof of the minor proposition, which also must be effected in answerable proportion to the restrictions and qualifications given to the major, or the whole will be void and of none effect;

that is, he must prove it by the testimony of God to be "according to godliness," and not give us in (by a pure begging of the thing in question) that it is so in *his* apprehension, and according to the principles whereon *he* doth proceed in the teaching and asserting of godliness. Mr Goodwin knows that there is no less difference between him and us about the nature and causes of godliness than there is about the perseverance of the saints; and therefore his asserting any doctrine to be suited to the promotion of godliness, that assertion being proportioned to his other hypothesis of his own, wherein we accord not with him, and in particular to his notions of the causes and nature of godliness, with which conceptions of his we have no communion, it cannot be of any weight with us unless he prove his affirmation according to the limitations before expressed. Now, this he attempteth in the words following:—

"What doctrine," saith he, "can there be more proper and powerful to promote godliness in the hearts and lives of men, than that which on the one hand promiseth a crown of blessedness and eternal glory to those that live godlily without declining, and on the other hand threateneth the vengeance of hell-fire eternally against those that shall turn aside into profaneness, and not return by repentance? whereas the doctrine which promiseth, and that with all possible certainty and assurance, all fulness of blessedness and glory to those that shall at any time be godly, though they shall the very next day or hour degenerate, and turn loose and profane, and continue never so long in such a course, is most manifestly destructive to godliness, and encouraging above measure unto profaneness."

Ans. There are two parts of this discourse, the one κατασκευαστική, or confirmatory of his own thesis; the other ἀνασκευαστική, or destructive of that which he opposeth. For the first, it is upon the matter all that he produceth for the confirmation of his minor proposition, wherein any singular concernment of his opinion doth lie. Now, that being, in a sound sense, the common inheritance of all that profess the truth, under what deceits or mistakes soever, the sum of what is here insisted on is, that the doctrine he maintaineth, concerning "the possibility of the saints' defection, promiseth a crown to them that continue in obedience, and threateneth vengeance of fire to them that turn to profaneness;" which, taken as a proof of his former assertion, is liable to some small exceptions: as,—

1. That this doth not at all prove the doctrine to be a branch or parcel of the gospel, it being, as it standeth severally by itself, the pure tenor of the covenant of works; which we confess to have been of singular importance for the propagation of godliness and holiness in them to whom it was given or with whom it was made, being given and made for that very end and purpose. But that this alone by itself is a peculiar branch or parcel of the gospel, or that it is of

such singular importance for the carrying on of gospel obedience, as so by itself proposed, *that* should here have been proved.

2. As it is also a part of the gospel, declaring the faithfulness of God, and the end and issue of the proposal of the gospel unto men, and of their receiving or refusing of it, so it is altogether foreign to the doctrine of Mr. Goodwin under contest. And he might as well have said that the doctrine of apostasy is of singular import for the promotion of holiness, because the doctrine of justification by faith is so; for what force of consequence is betwixt these two: "That God is a rewarder of them that obey him, and a punisher of them that rebel against him, is an incentive to obedience; therefore the doctrine that true believers united to Jesus Christ may utterly fall out of the favour of God, and turn from their obedience, and be damned for ever, there being no promise of God for their preservation, is also an incentive to holiness?"

3. What virtue soever there may be in this truth for the furtherance and promotion of holiness in the world, our doctrine layeth as clear claim to it as yours; that is, there is not any thing in the least in it inconsistent therewithal. We grant God threateneth the vengeance of hell-fire unto those that turn aside from their profession of holiness into profaneness, the gospel itself becoming thereby unto them "a savour of death unto death," the Lord thereby proclaiming to all the world that "the wages of sin" and infidelity "is death," and that "he that believeth not shall be damned;" but that any thing can hence be inferred for the apostasy of true believers, or how this assertion cometh to be appropriated to that doctrine, we see not.

The latter part of this discourse, whereby its author aimeth to exclude the doctrine hitherto asserted by us from any claim laid to usefulness for the promotion of godliness, is either a mistake of it, through ignorance of the opinion he hath undertaken to oppose, or a wilful perverting of it, contrary to his own science and conscience. Is that the doctrine you oppose? Is it so proposed by those who, through grace, have laboured to explain and vindicate it? Doth not the main weight of the doctrine turn on this hinge, that God hath promised to his saints, true believers, such supplies of the Spirit and grace as that they shall never degenerate into such loose and profane courses as are destructive to godliness? Doubtless that doctrine is of a most spotless, untainted innocency, which its adversaries dare not venture to strangle before they have violently and treacherously defloured it.

And thus Mr Goodwin leaveth his arguments in the dust, like the ostrich's eggs, under the feet of men, to be trampled on with ease.

The residue of this discourse, onwards to the next argument, being spent in the answering of pretended objections, put in against him-

self in the behalf of the doctrine of perseverance, not at all called out by the import of his present arguments and discourses, I might pass them over; but inasmuch as that which is spoken thereunto tendeth to the farther clearing of what formerly hath been evidenced concerning the suitableness of the doctrine contended for unto the promotion of holiness, I shall farther consider what he draweth forth on this occasion. Sect. 33, he giveth us an objection, and a fourfold answer thereunto, pp. 333–335. That which he calleth an objection he layeth down in these words:—

"If it be objected and said, 'Yea, but assurance of the unchangeableness of God's love towards him that is godly is both a more effectual and persuading motive unto godliness, and more encouraging to a persevering in godliness, than a doubtfulness or uncertainty whether God will be constant in his affection to such a man or no; certainty of reward is more encouraging unto action than uncertainty.'"

Ans. If any one hath been so weak as to make use of this plea in behalf of that doctrine it seemeth to defend (which I scarcely believe), it will, I doubt not, be an easy task to undertake that he shall be no more admitted or entertained as an advocate in this cause. The assurance of the unchangeableness of God's love to them that are godly is but one part of the doctrine in hand, and that such as may perhaps be common to it with that which is brought into competition with it. It is the assurance of the unchangeableness of God's love to a man, to keep him up to godliness, to preserve him in that state and condition of holiness to the end, and of the certainty of the continuance of the love of God unto him on that account and in that way, that is that great gospel motive to obedience wherein, as its peculiar, our doctrine glorieth, as hath formerly been manifested. Perhaps Mr Goodwin doth not think that any man is bound to lay more blocks in his own way than he judgeth himself well able to remove; and therefore he framed that objection, so that he might be sure to return at least a specious answer thereunto, and this he attempteth accordingly, and telleth us in his first paragraph three things:—

1. "That the doctrine teaching the saints' defection doth also maintain the unchangeableness of the love of God to them that are godly."

Ans. But what love, I pray you, is that which, when it might prevent it, will yet suffer those godly ones to become such ungodly villains and wretches as that it shall be utterly impossible for the Lord to continue his love to them? Is the love you mention indeed a love to their persons, or only an approbation of their duties and qualifications? If the first, whence is it that God ceaseth at any time to love them? Doth he change and alter his love like the sons

of men? "Why, they change, therefore he changeth also." That God changeth not, and therefore we, who are subject to change, are yet preserved from being consumed, we have heard; but that, upon the change that is in men, God also should change, we are yet to be instructed; and the immutability of God hath taken greater hold upon our understandings and in our hearts than that we should easily receive any thing so diametrically opposite thereunto. If the love mentioned be only an approbation of the qualifications that are in them, and of the duties that they do perform, then is it no more a love to them or to their persons than it is to the persons of the most profligate wretches that live. The object is duty solely, wherever it may be found, and not any person at all; for it is an act of God's *approving*, not *purposing* or *determining*, will. This is not our sense of the continuance of the love of God to them that are godly. So that there is no comparison betwixt the doctrines under contest, as to the asserting of the love of God to believers, or to them that are godly. Wherefore he saith,—

2. "That the doctrine he opposeth promiseth God's love and the unchangeable continuance of it unto men, though they change to profaneness." Though this is said over and over a hundred times, yet I cannot believe it, because the doctrine openly affirmeth the continuance of the love of God to them that are godly to be effectually and eventually preventive of any such profaneness as is inconsistent therewithal. And therefore much more vain is that which he affirmeth in the third place, namely,—

3. "That the doctrine of the perseverance of the saints doth not so much absolutely promise the love of God to them that are godly as it promiseth it conditionally to them that are profane, in case they have been godly; that is, it teacheth that God promiseth the certain continuance of his love to him that is godly, on condition he cease to be so and turn profane."

"Claudite jam rivos, pueri." We have enough of this already.

He addeth yet, "Neither is certainty of reward in every sense or kind more encouraging unto action than uncertainty in some kind. To promise with all possible assurance the same reward or prize to him that shall not run in the race which is promised to him that shall run, is not more encouraging unto men thus to run than to promise it conditionally upon their running; which is a promising of it with uncertainty in this respect, because it is uncertain whether men will run in the said race or no, and consequently whether they shall receive the said prize or no, upon such a promise. Uncertainty of reward is, then, and in such cases, more encouraging unto action than certainty, when the certainty of obtaining or receiving it is suspended upon the act, not when it is assured unto men whether they act or no."

Ans. (1.) Persuade your servants, your labourers, if you can, of that great encouragement that lies in the uncertainty of a reward above that which may be had from an assurance thereof. We are not as yet of that mind. And yet,—

(2.) We do not lay the motive unto obedience tendered by the doctrine we contest for only on the certainty of reward which it asserteth,—which yet is such that without it all others must needs be of little purpose,—but it hath also other advantageous influences into the promotion of holiness, which in part have been insisted on.

(3.) It seemeth we say that "God promiseth a reward to them that shall not run a race," because we maintain that he promiseth it to none but those who do run in a race, promising withal to give them strength, power, and will, that they may do so to the end.

(4.) For the close, which amounteth to this, that the certainty of reward when it is uncertain (for so it is made to be when it is suspended on actions that are uncertain) is more encouraging to action than certainty of reward not so suspended, I shall add only (because I know not indeed how this discourse hangeth on the business under consideration), that we neither suspend the certainty of reward upon our actions in the sense intimated, neither do we say that it is assured to men whether they act or no; but we say that the reward, which is of grace, through the unchangeable love of God, shall be given to them that act in holiness; and through the same love shall all believers be kept to such an acting of holiness as God thinketh good to carry them out unto, for the "fulfilling of all the good pleasure of his goodness in them, and for making them meet for the inheritance of the saints in light." We do not think mediums designed of God for the accomplishment of any end are such conditions of the end that it is suspended on them in uncertainty in respect of the issue before its accomplishment; neither do we grant, nor can it be proved, that God assigneth any medium for the accomplishment of a determinate end (such as we have proved the salvation of all believers to be), and leaves it in such a condition as that not only it shall be effected and produced suitably to the nature of the immediate cause of which it is, whether free, necessary, or contingent, but also shall be so far uncertain as that it may or may not be wrought and accomplished.

The former part of this third paragraph is but a repetition of an assertion which, upon the credit of his own single testimony, we have had often tendered, namely, "That an assurance given him that is godly of the love of God not depending on any thing in him, which it is uncertain whether he will perform or no, is no motive to men to continue in the ways of holiness." This, as I said before, I cannot close withal. That that which is a motive to faith and love, and eminently suited to the stirring of them up, and setting them on

work, is also a motive to the obedience which is called "work of faith and labour of love," hath been declared. If there be any thing of the new and heavenly nature in the soul, any quality or disposition of a child therein, what can be more effectual to promote or advance the fear, honour, and reverence of God in it, than an assurance of his Spirit to continue and preserve it in those ways which are well pleasing unto him? It is confessed that, in many promises of acceptation here and reward hereafter, the things and duties that are the means and ways of enjoying the one and attaining the other are mentioned, not as conditions of the grace and love of God to them to whom the promises are made, as though they should depend on any thing of their uncertain accomplishment, as hath been declared, but only as the means and ways which God hath appointed for men to use and walk in unto those ends, and which he hath absolutely promised to work in them and to continue to them.

4. The close of this paragraph, in the fourth place, deserveth a little more clear consideration, it containing an assertion which some would not believe when it was told them, and which hath stumbled not a few at the repetition of it. Thus, then, he proceedeth:—

"Besides, whether any such assurance of the unchangeableness of the love of God towards him that is godly, as the objection speaketh of, can be effectually and upon sufficient grounds cleared and proved, is very questionable, yea, I conceive there is more reason to judge otherwise than so. Yea, that which is more, I verily believe that in case any such assurance of the unchangeableness of God's love were to be found in, or could regularly be deduced from, the Scriptures, it were a just ground to any intelligent and considering man to question their authority, and whether they were from God or no; for that a God infinitely righteous and holy should irreversibly assure the immortal and undefiled inheritance of his grace and favour unto any creature whatsoever, so that though this creature should prove never so abominable in his sight, never so outrageously and desperately wicked and profane, he should not be at liberty to withhold this inheritance from him, is a saying doubtless too hard for any man who rightly understandeth and considereth the nature of God to bear."

Ans. The love mentioned in the foregoing objection is that which God beareth to them that are godly in Jesus Christ, exerting itself partly in his gracious acceptation of their persons in the Son of his love, partly in giving to them of his Holy Spirit and grace, so that they shall never depart utterly and wickedly from him, and forsake him, or reject him from being their God. Whether an assurance of this love may on good grounds be given to believers hath been already considered, and the affirmative, I hope, in some good measure confirmed; the farther demonstration of it awaiting its proper sea-

son, which the will of God shall give unto it. This Mr Goodwin saith to him is "questionable;" yea, I suppose it is with him out of question, that it cannot be, else surely he would not have taken so much pains in labouring to disprove it. And that this is his resolved judgment he manifesteth in the next words, "I verily believe that in case any such assurance were to be found," etc.; that is, "Si Deus homini non placuerit, Deus non erit." What more contemptible could the Pagans of old have spoken of their dunghill deities, with their amphibolous [*i.e.*, ambiguous] oracles? Were it not fitter language for the Indian conjurers, who beat and afflict their hellish gods if they answer not according to their desires? The whole authority of God, and of his word in the Scriptures, is here cast down before the consideration of an "intelligent man" (forsooth), or "a vain man that would be wise, but is like the wild ass's colt." And this "intelligent man," it seems, may contend to reject the word of God, and yet be accounted most wise! Of old, the prophet thought not so. To what end is any farther dispute? If the Scripture speaketh not to Mr Goodwin's mind (for doubtless he is "an intelligent and considering man"), he seeth sufficient ground to question its authority. By what way possible any man can more advance himself into the throne of God than by entertaining such thoughts and conceptions as these, I know not. An "intelligent man" is supposed to have from himself, and his own wisdom and intelligence, considerations of God's nature and perfections by which he is to regulate and measure all things that are affirmed of God or his will in the Scripture. If what is so delivered suit these conceptions of his, that Scripture wherein it is delivered may pass for canonical and authentic; if otherwise, "eadem facilitate rejicitur qua asseritur," which was sometimes spoken of traditionals, but, it seems, may now be extended to the written word. The Scripture is supposed to hold out things contrary to what this "intelligent man" hath conceived and considered, and this is asserted as a just ground to question its authority; and if this be not a progress in the contempt of the word of God to whatever yet Papists, Socinians, or enthusiasts, have attempted, I am deceived. "To the law and to the testimony" with all the conceptions and notions of the most intelligent men: if they answer not to this rule, "it is because there is no light in them."

But he addeth the reason of this bold assertion; for saith he, "That a God infinitely righteous and holy should irreversibly," etc.

Ans. Neither yet doth this at all mend the matter. Neither doth the particular instance given alter at all, but confirm the first general assertion,—namely, "That if there be any thing in the Scriptures contrary to those thoughts of God which an intelligent man (without the Scripture) doth conceive of him, he hath just grounds to question their authority;" which wholly casts down the word of God from its

excellency, and setteth a poor, dark, blind creature, under the notion of an "intelligent man," at liberty from his subjection thereunto, making him his own rule and guide as to his apprehensions of God and his will. And is it possible that such a thought should enter into the heart of a man fearing God and reverencing his word, which God hath magnified above all his name? There is scarce any one truth in the whole book of God, but some men, passing in the world for "intelligent and considering men," do look upon it and profess it to be unworthy of an infinitely righteous and holy God. So do the Socinians think of the doctrine of the satisfaction of Christ, the great treasure of the church. At the rate that men pass at in this world, it will be difficult to exclude many of them from the number of "intelligent and considering men;" and are they not all absolved here by Mr Goodwin, on this principle, from bowing to the authority of God in the Scriptures, having "just ground to question whether they are from God or no?" The case is the same with the Papists and others, in sundry particulars. Frame the supposition how you will, in things never so uncouth and strange, yet if this be the position, that in things which appear so to men, upon their consideration, if any thing in the Scripture be held out or may be deduced from this to the contrary, they are at liberty from submitting their understandings to them, and may arraign them as false and supposititious, their whole divine authority is unquestionably cast down to the ground, and trampled on by the feet of men. Καὶ ταῦτα μὲν πρὸς ταῦτα. God will take care for the vindication of the honour of his word.

The supposition here made by Mr Goodwin, and imposed on his adversaries, is, as hath been showed, wretchedly false, not once spoken or owned by them with whom he hath to do, not having the least colour given unto it by the doctrine they maintain; yea, it is diametrically opposite thereunto. The main of what they teach, and which Mr Goodwin hath opposed in this treatise, endeavouring to answer that eminent place of 1 John iii. 9, with many others produced and argued to that purpose, is, that God will, according to the tenor of the covenant of grace, so write his law in the hearts of his, and put his fear in their inward parts, that they shall never depart from him, so as to become "desperately and outrageously profane," but be preserved such to the end as that the Lord, with the greatest advantage of glory to his infinite wisdom, righteousness, and holiness, may "irreversibly assure the immortal inheritance of his love and favour unto them." So that Mr Goodwin's discourse to the end of this section, concerning the continuance of the love of God to them that are wicked, with an equal measure of favour to them that are godly, according to this doctrine, is vain and grossly sophistical, and such as he himself knoweth to be so. To say "every one that doth evil is good in the sight of the Lord, and that he delighteth in him,"—that

is, he approveth wicked and ungodly men,—we know is sufficiently dishonourable to him; but yet to say that he delighteth in his church and people, washed and made holy in the blood of Christ, notwithstanding their failings, or their being sometimes overtaken with great sins, when he pleaseth, in an extraordinary way, for ends best known to himself, to permit them to fall into them (which yet he doth seldom and rarely), is that which himself affirmeth and ascribeth to himself in innumerable places of Scripture (if their authority may pass unquestioned), to the praise of the glory of his grace. But it seemeth, if we take any care that Mr Goodwin may not call the authority of the Scriptures into question (he being fully resolved that the doctrine of the saints' perseverance is unworthy of a holy and righteous God), we must give over all attempts of farther deducing it from them; but yet, for the present, we shall consider what he hath farther to object against it.

Sect. 34, he farther objecteth against himself and his doctrine, in the behalf of that which he doth oppose, in these words:—

"It is possible that yet some will farther object against the argument in hand: 'Unless the saints be assured of the perpetuity of their standing in the grace and favour of God, they must needs be under fears of falling away, and so of perishing; and fear, we know, is of a discouraging and enfeebling nature, an enemy unto such actions which men of confidence and courage are apt to undertake.'"

Ans. What this objection maketh in this place I know not. It neither asserteth any eminency in the doctrine by Mr Goodwin opposed, as to the promotion of godliness, nor immediately challengeth that which he doth maintain of a contrary tendency, but only intimateth that the saints' consolation and peace is weakened by unnecessary fears,—such as his opinion is apt to ingenerate in them. But, however, thus far I own it, as to the main of the observation in hand, that the doctrine of the apostasy of believers is apt and suited to cut the saints of God and heirs of the promise short of that strong consolation which he is so abundantly willing that they should receive, and to fill their souls and perplex their consciences with cares, fears, and manifold entanglements, suited to weaken their faith and love, and alienate their hearts from that delight in God to which they are called, and otherwise would be carried forth unto. They being all of them, in some measure, acquainted with the strength, subtlety, and power, of indwelling sin; the advantages of Satan in his manifold temptations; the eminent success which they see every day the "principalities and powers in heavenly places," which they wrestle withal, to have against them; and being herewithal taught that there is neither purpose nor promise of God for their preservation, that there is nothing to that purpose in the covenant of grace;—the consideration of their condition must of necessity fill them with innu-

merable perplexities, and make them their own tormentors all their days. Thus far, I say, I own the objection. That it is not properly courage or confidence, but faith, love, and reverence, that are the principles of our actions in walking with God, hath been declared.

But what saith Mr Goodwin to the objection as by himself laid down? Besides what he relateth of his conquest of it in other places, he addeth,—

That "the saints, notwithstanding the possibility of their final falling away, have, or may have, such an assurance of the perpetuity of their standing in the grace and favour of God as may exclude all fear, at least that which is of a discouraging or enfeebling nature. The apostle, as we have formerly showed, lived at a very excellent rate both of courage and confidence, notwithstanding he knew that it was possible for him to become a reprobate. The assurance he had, that, upon a diligent use of those means which he knew assuredly God would vouchsafe unto him, he should prevent his being a reprobate, was a golden foundation unto him of that confidence and courage wherein he equalized the holy angels themselves."

Ans. 1. The grounds asserted by Mr Goodwin on which believers may build the assurance pretended, of the perpetuity of their standing in the grace and favour of God, notwithstanding the possibility of their defection (the assertion whereof costs no less than the denying of all or any influence from the purpose, promises, covenant, or oath of God, or mediation of Christ, into their preservation), I have formerly considered, and manifested them to be so exceeding unable to bear any such building of confidence upon as is pretended, that it is almost a miracle how any thoughts of such a structure on such quicksands could ever find place in the mind of a man any thing seriously acquainted with the ways of God. The whole of the saints' preservation in the love and favour of God (as it is also expressed in this section) is resolved into men's self-considerations and endeavours. Being weary, it seemeth, of leaning on the power of God, to be kept thereby unto eternal salvation, men begin to trust to themselves and their own abilities to be their own keepers; but what will they do in the end thereof? The sum of what Mr Goodwin hath formerly said, and what he repeateth again to the end of this section, is, "Men need not fear their falling away, though it is possible, seeing they may easily prevent it if they will;"—expressions sufficiently contemptive of the grace of God, and the salvation that God assureth us thereby; an assertion which those ancients which Mr Goodwin laboureth to draw into communion with him would have rejected and cast out as heretical. Man's ability thus to preserve himself in the grace and favour of God to the end is either from himself or from the grace of God? If from himself, let us know what that ability is, and wherein it doth consist, and how he comes

by it. Christ telleth us that "without him we can do nothing;" and the apostle, that "we are not sufficient of ourselves to think a good thought, but that all our sufficiency is of God:" so that this self-ability for preservation extendeth not to the thinking a good thought, —indeed is nothing. Is it from the grace of God? Then the assurance of it must be either because God promised absolutely so to "work in him both to will and to do of his good pleasure" as that he should certainly be preserved; which you will not say, as I suppose: or because he will so afford him his grace as that he may make use of it to the end proposed if he please. But now what assurance hath he that he shall so make use of his grace as to make it effectual for the end designed? And is this good use of grace of himself, or of grace also? If of himself, it is "nothing," as was showed from that of our Saviour, John xv. 5, neither can a man promise himself much assistance from the ability of doing nothing at all. If you shall say it is of grace, the same question ariseth as formerly, manifesting that there is not the least assurance imaginable of our continuance in the grace and favour of God, but what ariseth from his faithful promises (efficaciously overcoming all interveniencies) that we shall so do.

2. He telleth us that "Paul lived at an excellent rate of assurance, and yet knew that it was possible for him to be a reprobate." I confess, indeed, he lived at an excellent rate of assurance, which he manifesteth himself to have received upon such principles and foundations as were common to him with all true believers, Rom. viii. 32–35. That it was possible in respect of the event that he might have been a reprobate who was chosen from eternity is not proved. He saith, indeed, 1 Cor. ix. 27, "I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection, lest by any means I should be found ἀδόκιμος." That by ἀδόκιμος, there, any more is intended than "not approved or accepted" in that service he had in hand, Mr Goodwin laboureth not to evince; and if that be the sense of the words (as the scope of the whole manifesteth it to be), then all that Paul there expresseth is, that he endeavoured always to approve himself, and by all means, an acceptable workman, not to be rejected or disallowed in the labour of preaching the gospel which he had undertaken. And we acknowledge that this thought and contrivance may well become him who liveth at the greatest rate of assurance that God affordeth to any here below; yea, that such thoughts and endeavours do naturally and genuinely flow from the assurance of the love of God we also grant. But yet, supposing that being a reprobate, by a metonymy of the effect, may here signify to be damned, how doth this prove that it was possible in respect of the event that he should be damned? "Why, because he laboured that he might not be so." That is, no man can use the means of avoiding any thing, but he must be uncertain whether in

the use of those means it may be avoided or no! This looketh like begging the thing in question. Paul, labouring and endeavouring in the ways expressed, evidently manifesteth such a labour and endeavour, in such a way, to be the appointed means of avoiding the condition of being ἀδόκιμος. That there is an infallible connection betwixt the use of such means and the deliverance from that state is proved. But that Paul had not assurance of the sufficiency of the grace of God with him for his certain use of those means, and certain, infallible deliverance from that end, nothing in the least is intimated in the text, or brought in from any place else by Mr Goodwin, to give colour thereunto. But of this scripture at large afterward.

Supposing himself to have fairly quit himself of the former plea in the behalf of our doctrine, as by himself proposed, he addeth another pretension in the behalf of the same plea formerly produced, which he attempteth also to take out of the way, having in some measure prepared it in his proposal of it for an easy removal. Thus, then, he proceedeth, "To pretend that, the weakness of the flesh in the best of saints considered, and their aptness to go astray, they must needs lie under many troublesome and tormenting fears of perishing, unless they have some promise or assurance from God to support them, that notwithstanding any declinings or goings astray incident unto them yet they shall not lose his favour or perish, is to pretend nothing but what hath been thoroughly answered already, especially in chap. ix."

Ans. Before I can admit this plea to be put in in our behalf, I shall crave leave a little to rectify and point it more sharply against the doctrine it aimeth to oppose. I say, then,—

1. It is not the "weakness of the flesh," or the feebleness and disability of our natural man to act in, or go through with, great duties and trials, but the strength and wilfulness of the flesh, that is, of the corrupted man, even in the best of saints, continually provoking and seducing them, with sometimes an insuperable efficacy leading them captive, and working in them continually with a thousand baits and wiles (as hath been in part discovered), labouring to turn them aside from God, that fills the saints of God with tormenting, perplexing fears of perishing; and must needs do so if they have no promise of God for their preservation. Besides all this strength and wilfulness of the flesh, they are exposed to the assaults of other most dreadful adversaries, "wrestling with principalities and powers in heavenly places," and contending with the world as it lieth under the curse, all their days. To refer all the oppositions that believers meet withal in the course of their obedience, and which may fill them with fears that they shall one day perish, if not supported by an almighty hand, and "kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation," unto the "weakness of the flesh,"—which, in the place where

the expression is used, plainly pointeth at the disability of the natural man to abide in and go through with great duties and trials,—is a most vain and empty contemplation. Those who have to do with God in the matter of gospel obedience, and know what it is indeed to "serve him under temptations," can tell you another manner of story; and among them Mr Goodwin could do so to the purpose, if his thoughts were not prejudiced by any biassing opinions that must be leaned unto.

2. We do not say that the saints of God, in the condition mentioned, stand in need of any promise of God, that notwithstanding any declinings or goings astray incident unto them, they shall not lose his favour or perish; but, that they shall have such a presence of his Spirit and sufficiency of his grace with them all their days, that they shall never, notwithstanding all the oppositions and difficulties they meet withal, utterly fail in their faith, nor be prevailed against to depart wickedly and utterly from God. And now I see not but that, supposing that it is necessary that the saints be delivered from troublesome, perplexing fears of perishing, and that God hath made provision for that end and purpose (which that he hath seems to be granted by our author),—I say, I cannot see but that this plea striketh at the very heart of the apostasy of saints, though not very fitly brought in in this place, in reference to the argument that occasioned it. But our author, knowing his faculty to lie more in evading what is objected against him than in urging arguments for his own opinion, doth everywhere, upon the first proposal of any argument, divert to other considerations and to the answering of objections, though, perhaps, not at all to the plea in hand, nor any way occasioned by it. But what saith he, now, in defence of his dearly beloved, thus attempted, to vindicate it from this sore imputation of robbing and despoiling the saints of God of their peace and assurance, purchased for them at no less rate than the blood of the Lord Jesus? He telleth you, then, three things:—

1. "That the weakness of the flesh, or aptness of miscarrying through this, is no reasonable ground of fear to any true believer of his perishing, considering that no man loseth or forfeiteth the grace and favour of God through sins of weakness or infirmity. It is only the strength of sin and corruption in men that exposeth to the danger of losing the love of God."

Ans. The latter part of these words plainly discovers the vanity of the former, as produced for any such end and purpose as that in hand: for though I willingly grant that that which is termed "The weakness of the flesh" is enough to make any man whatever fear that he shall not hold out in the course of his obedience to the end, if he have no promise of supportment and preservation by an almighty power (notwithstanding it is affirmed that it draweth men only to

"sins of weakness or infirmity," which I thought had not been called so from weakness of the flesh, but of grace in believers), yet it is the strength, the power, the law, the subtlety of the flesh, or indwelling sin, that is the matter of our plea in this case; not that which Paul "gloried in," even his "infirmity," but that which made him cry out, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" and from the distress by reason whereof he found no deliverance, but only in the assured love of God in Jesus Christ, Rom. vii., viii. 1. So that notwithstanding this reply, shaped to fortify the minds of men against their failings upon the account of the weakness of grace, rather than of the flesh (which yet it is not able to do, for if there be no promise to the contrary, why may not the principle which carrieth men forth to lesser carry them also forth to greater and more provoking sins? what boundaries will you prescribe unto these sins of infirmity?), the pretension from the strength of the flesh (yea, from the weakness of it) holdeth good against the saints' establishment in peace and assurance, upon the account of their being destitute of any promise of preservation by God.

2. "If the saints be willing," saith he, "to strengthen the Spirit in them, and make him willing proportionably to the means prescribed and vouchsafed unto them by God for such a purpose, this will fully balance the weakness of the flesh, and prevent the miscarriages and breaking out hereof. 'This, I say, then,' saith the apostle, 'walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lusts of the flesh.' And again, 'If ye be led by the Spirit, ye are not under the law,' and consequently are in no danger of losing the favour of God, or of perishing for such sins which, under the conduct of the Spirit, ye are subject unto."

Ans. But that all now must be taken in good part, and nothing called strange or uncouth, since we have passed the pikes in the last section, I should somewhat admire at the doctrine of this paragraph; for,—

(1.) Here is a willing, in reference to a great spiritual duty, supposed in men antecedent to any assistance of Him who "worketh both to will and to do of his good pleasure." What he worketh, he worketh by the Spirit; but this is a willing in us distinct from and antecedent to the appearing of the Spirit, for the strengthening thereof.

(2.) That whereas we have hitherto imagined that the Spirit strengtheneth the saints, and that their supportment had been from him, as we partly also before declared (at least we did our mind to be so persuaded), it seemeth they "strengthen the Spirit in them," and not he them! How, or by what means, or by what principles in them, it is that so they do is not declared. Besides, what is here intended by "the Spirit" is not manifested. If it be the holy and blessed Spirit of God, he hath no need of our strengthening; he is able of

himself to "make us meet for the inheritance of the saints in light." If it be the gracious principles that are bestowed upon the saints that are intended, the "new creature," the "inward man," called "the Spirit" in the Scripture, in opposition to "the flesh;" if our strengthening this Spirit be any thing but the acting of the graces intended thereby in us, I know not what you mean. Especially, in what is or consists their acting to make "the Spirit willing proportionably to the means we do receive," am I to seek. To say that we receive outward means of God (for so they must be, being distinguished from the Spirit), and thereupon of ourselves do make the Spirit willing, and strengthen him to the performance of God, surely holds out a very sufficient power in spiritual things inbred in us and abiding with us, whereof there is not the least line or appearance in the whole book of God, nor in any author urged by Mr Goodwin to give countenance to his persuasion.

(3.) Neither is the sum of all this answer any other but this: "If we are willing, and will prevent all miscarriages from the weakness of the flesh, we may." But how we become willing so to do, and what assurance we have that we shall be so willing, seeing all in us by nature as to any spiritual duty is flesh, is not intimated in the least, John iii. 6. This is strenuously supposed all along, that to be willing unto spiritual good in a spiritual manner is wholly in our own power; and an easy thing it is, no doubt. The plea in hand is: Such is the strength of indwelling sin in the best of the saints, and so easily doth it beset them, that if they have not some promise of God to assure them that they shall have constant supply of grace from him, and by his power be preserved, it is impossible but that they must be filled with perplexing fears that they shall not hold out in giving him willing obedience to the end, their will being in an especial manner entangled with the power of sin. It is answered, "If men be but willing, etc., they need not fear this or any such issue;" that is, "If they do the thing which they fear, and have reasons invincible to fear, that they shall not, they need not fear but that they shall do it;" which is nothing but an absurd begging of the thing in question. Neither is there any thing in the Scripture that will give a pass to this beggar, or shelter him from due correction. The apostle, indeed, saith, that if we "walk in the Spirit, we shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh." And good reason there is for it; for, as he told us, these are contrary to one another, and opposite to one another, and bring forth such diverse and contrary fruits in them in whom they are, that if we walk in the one we shall not fulfil the lusts of the other. But what assurance have we that we shall "walk in the Spirit," if it be not hence, that God hath promised that "his Spirit shall never depart from us?" And he saith, "If we are led by the Spirit we are not under the law;" which, by the way, letteth us see that the

Spirit leadeth us,—that is, maketh us willing, and strengtheneth us, not we him. But on what account shall or dare any man promise to himself that the Spirit will continue so to do, if God hath not promised that he shall so do? or, if his leading of us be only on condition that we be willing to be led, how shall we be in the least ascertained (supposing us in any measure acquainted with the power of indwelling sin) that we shall be always so willing? Let, then, this pass with what was said before, as nothing to the thing in hand.

3. "It is answered, then (thirdly and lastly), there is no such aptness or proneness unto sin,—sins, I mean, of a disinheriting import,—in saints or true believers, as is pretended; but, on the contrary, a strong propension or inclination unto righteousness reigneth in them. We heard formerly from the apostle, 1 John iii. 9, that 'he that is born of God cannot sin;' and also from 1 John v. 18. From these suppositions, with many other of like import, it is evident that there is a pregnant, strong, overpowering propension in all true believers to walk holily and to live righteously: so that to refrain sinning in the kind intended is no such great mastery, no such matter of difficulty, unto such men; and that when they are overcome and fall into sin, it is through a mere voluntary neglect. And thus we see, all things impartially weighed and debated to and fro, that the 'doctrine which supposeth a possibility of the saints' declining is the doctrine which is according to godliness,' and the corrival of it an enemy thereto."

Ans. We have here an assertion, an inference, and a conclusion. The assertion is, that "there is no such aptness and proneness to sin in believers as is intimated," and that "because there is such a strong propensity in them to righteousness," which that they have is proved from sundry places of Scripture. That is, because the Spirit is in believers, the flesh is not in them; because they have a new man in them, they have not an old; because they have a principle of life, they have not a body of death. That is, where the Spirit lusteth against the flesh, the flesh lusteth not against the Spirit. We thought the doctrine of Paul, Rom. vii., Gal. v. 17, and in innumerable other places, with the experience of all the saints in the world, had lain against this piece of sophistry. It is true, their propension unto righteousness *reigneth* in them, but it is as true their propension unto sin *rebelleth* in them. Though the land be conquered for Christ, yet the Canaanites will dwell in it; and if the saints leave off but one day the work of killing, crucifying, and mortifying, they will quickly find an actual rebellion in them not easy to be suppressed. They have, indeed, a propension to holiness ruling in them, but also a propension unto sin dwelling in them; so that "when they would do good, evil is present with them, and the good they would do they cannot." But when Mr Goodwin can prove this conse-

quence, that saints have strong inclinations to righteousness, therefore they have not so to sin, for my part I will forbear for ever disputing with him. If he can beat us, not only from Scripture, but from all our spiritual sense and experience, doubtless it is to no purpose to contend any longer with him. Hence, then,—

He inferreth that "to abstain from sinning,"—that is, sinning customarily and against conscience, so as to endanger the loss of the favour of God,—"is no such great mastery, no such matter of difficulty, to such men." This abstaining from such sins on the one hand is the whole course of our gospel obedience; which, it seemeth, however it be compared to "running in a race," "striving for masteries," and be called "resisting unto blood," "wrestling with principalities and powers," and requiring for its carrying on "the exceeding greatness of the power of God," with suitable "help in time of need" from Jesus Christ, who is sensible of the weight of it, as no small matter, knowing what it is to "serve God in temptations," yet is it indeed but a trifling thing, a matter of no great difficulty or mastery. Do men watch, pray, contend, fight, wrestle with God and Satan? Doth the Lord put forth his power, and the Lord Jesus Christ continually intercede, for the preservation of the saints? "Ad quid perditio hæc?" To what end is all this toil and labour about a thing of little or no weight? "Egregiam vero laudem!" We know, indeed, the "yoke of Christ is easy, and his commandments not grievous; that we can do all things through him that enableth us:" but to make gospel obedience so slight a thing that it is no great mastery, or matter of no great commendation to hold out in it to the end, this we were to learn till now, and are as yet slow of heart to receive it.

The conclusion is, "Iö, Pæan, vicimus." "All things impartially weighed, the case is ours, and godliness exceedingly promoted by the doctrine of the possibility of the saints' defection (Ὅπερ ἔδει δεῖξαι), and the corrival of it an enemy to it;"—to prove which not one word in the argument hath been spoken, nor to free the other from a charge of a direct contrary importance, one word to the purpose. And of Mr Goodwin's sixth argument for his doctrine of the apostasy of saints, this is the end.

But this is not all he hath to say in this case in hand. Indeed the main design of his whole 13th chapter, consisting of forty-one sections, and about so many pages in his book, and containing all which, in an argumentative way, he insisteth on in the case in hand, looketh this way; and therefore, having already plucked away one of the main props of that discourse, I shall apply myself to take away those which do remain, that the whole may justly fall to the ground, and therefore shall, as briefly as I can, consider the whole of that discourse, containing nine arguments against the perseverance of saints, for the possibility of their total and final defection.

CHAPTER XII.

OBJECTIONS TO THE DOCTRINE REFUTED.

Mr G.'s entrance and preface to his arguments from the apostasy of the saints considered—The weakness of his first argument—The import of it—Answer to that first argument—Doctrine may pretend to give God the glory of being no accepter of persons, and yet be false—Justification by works of that rank and order—Acceptation of persons, what, and wherein it consisteth—No place for it with God—Contrary to distributive justice—The doctrine of the saints' perseverance charged with rendering God an accepter of persons unjustly—What it says looking this way—The sum of the charge against it considered and removed—Mr G.'s second argument, and the weight by him hung thereon—The original of this argument—By whom somewhat insisted on—The argument itself in his words proposed—Of the use and end of the ministry—Whether weakened by the doctrine of perseverance—Entrance into an answer to that argument—The foundation laid of it false, and why—It falsely imposeth on the doctrine of perseverance sundry things by it disclaimed—The first considered—The iniquity of those impositions farther discovered—The true state of the difference as to this argument declared—The argument rectified—The re-enforcement of the minor attempted and considered—The manner of God's operations with and in natural and voluntary agents compared—Efficacy of grace and liberty in man consistent—An objection to himself framed by Mr G.—That objection rectified—Perseverance, how "absolutely and simply necessary," how not—The removal of the pretended objection farther insisted on by Mr G.—That discourse discussed, and manifested to be weak and sophistical—The consistency of exhortations and promises farther cleared—The manner of the operation of grace in and upon the wills of men considered—The inconsistency of exhortations with the efficacy of grace disputed by Mr G.—That discourse removed, and the use of exhortations farther cleared—Obedience to them twofold, habitual, actual—Of the physical operation of grace and means of the word—Their compliance and use—How the one and the other affect the will—Inclination to persevere when wrought in believers—Of the manner of God's operation on the wills of men—Mr G.'s discourse and judgment considered—Effects follow, as to their kind, their next causes—The same act of the will physical and moral upon several accounts—Those accounts considered—God, by the real efficacy of the Spirit, produceth in us acts of the will morally good—That confirmed from Scripture—Conclusion from thence—Of the terms "physical," "moral," and "necessary," and their use in things of the nature under consideration—Moral causes of physical effects—The concurrence of physical and moral causes for producing the same effect—The efficacy of grace and exhortations—"Physical" and "necessary," how distinguished—"Moral" and "not necessary" confounded by Mr G.—Mr G.'s farther progress considered—What operation of God on the will of man he allows—All physical operation by him excluded—Mr G.'s sense of the difference between the working of God and a minister on the will, that it is but gradual; considered and removed—All working of God on the will by him confined to persuasion—Persuasion gives no strength or ability to the person persuaded—All immediate actings of God to good in men by Mr G. utterly excluded—Wherein God's persuading men doth consist, according to Mr G.—1 Cor. iii. 9 considered—Of the concurrence of divers agents to the production of the same effect—The sum of the seventh section of chap. xiii.—The will, how necessitated, how free—In what sense Mr G. allows God's per-

suasions to be irresistible—The dealings of God and men ill compared—Paul's exhortation to the use of means, when the end was certain, Acts xxvii. 21–36, considered—God deals with men as men, exhorting them; and as corrupted men, assisting them—Of promises of temporal things, whether all conditional—What condition in the promise made to Paul, Acts xxvii. 24—Farther of that promise; its infallibility and means of accomplishment—The same considerations farther prosecuted—Of promises of perseverance and exhortations to perform in conjunction—Mr G.'s opposition hereunto—Promises and exhortations in conjunction—1 Cor. x. 12, 13 discussed—An absolute promise of perseverance therein evinced—Phil. ii. 12, 13, to the same purpose, considered—Mr G.'s interpretation of that place proposed, removed—Heb. vi. 4–6, 9. to the same purpose insisted on—Of the consistency of threatenings with the promises of perseverance—Mr G.'s opposition hereunto considered and removed—What promises of perseverance are asserted; how absolute and infrustrable—Fear of hell and punishment twofold—The fear intended to be ingenerated by threatenings not inconsistent with the assurance given by promises—Five considerations about the use of threatenings—The first, etc. —Hypocrites, how threatened for apostasy—Of the end and aim of God in threatenings—Of the proper end and efficacy of threatenings with reference unto true believers—Fear of hell and punishment, how far a principle of obedience in the saints—Of Noah's fear, Heb. xi. 7—Mr G.'s farther arguings for the efficacy of the fear of hell unto obedience in the saints proposed, considered, removed—1 John iv. 18 considered—Of the obedience of saints to their heavenly Father, compared to the obedience of children to their natural parents—Mr G.'s monstrous conception about this thing—How fear and love are principles of obedience, and in what sense—That which is done from fear not done willingly nor cheerfully—How fear, and what fear, hath torment—Of the nature and use of promises—Close of the answer to this argument.

It will be needless to use many words unto the discourse of the first section, seeing it will not in the least prejudice our cause in hand to leave Mr Goodwin in full possession of all the glory of the rhetoric thereof; for although I cannot close with him in the exposition given of that expression, 1 Tim. vi. 16, "God inhabiteth light inaccessible," something, in my weak apprehension, much more glorious and divine being comprised therein than what it is here turned aside unto (neither am I in the least convinced of the truth τῆς ἀποδόσεως of the former discourse, in the close of the whole, asserting a deliverance to be obtained from our thoughts of the doctrine of the defection of the saints, which he intimateth to be [evangelical], that it is anti-evangelical, tormenting, and bringing souls under bondage, by a narrow and unprejudicate search into it, finding myself every day more and more confirmed in thoughts of that kind concerning it by my engagement into such an inquiry, which hath been observed in this present discourse as far as my weakness will permit), yet it being not in the least argumentative, but, for the whole frame and intendment of it, *commune exordium*, and that which any man of any opinion in the world might make use of, I shall not insist upon it.

His second section containeth his first argument, drawn forth in the defence of his doctrine of the "possibility" (as he calleth it, but indeed what it is we have heard) "of the defection of believers." Of this I presume he intended no more use but (as a forlorn) to begin a light skirmish with his adversaries, ordering it to retreat to his main body advancing after, or desperately casting it away, to abate the edge of his combatants' weapons, it is so weak and feeble; and therefore I shall be very brief in the consideration of it. Thus, then, he proposeth it:—

"That doctrine which rendereth God free from the unrighteousness which the Scripture calleth the respecting of persons of men, is a doctrine of perfect consistence with the Scripture and the truth; the doctrine which teacheth the possibility of the saints' declining, and this unto death, is a doctrine of this import: *ergo.*"

Ans. The first proposition must be supposed universal, or else the whole will quickly be manifested to be unconclusive. If it be only *indefinite*, and so equivalent, as it lieth, to a particular, the conclusion is from all particulars, and of no force, as Mr Goodwin well knoweth. Take it *universally*, and I say it is evidently false, and might easily be disproved by innumerable instances. Not that any error or falsehood can indeed give God the glory of any one of his attributes, but that they may be fitted and suited for such a service, were not their throats cut and their mouths stopped by the lies that are in them; which Mr Goodwin's doctrine is no less liable to than any other, and not at all exempted from that condition by its seeming subserviency unto God's *aprosopolepsia.* Doth not the doctrine of justification by works, even in the most rigid sense of it, according to the tenor of the old covenant, absolutely render God free from the unrighteousness of accepting of persons? and yet, for all that, it hath not one jot the more of truth in it, nor is it the less anti-evangelical. This foundation, then, being removed, whatever is built upon it *mole ruit suâ.* Neither is it in any measure restored or laid anew by the reason of it given by Mr Goodwin, namely, "That the Scripture affirmeth in sundry places that God is no accepter of persons;" for he that shall hence conclude that whatever doctrine affirmeth, directly or by consequence, that God is no accepter of persons, whatever other abomination it is evidently teeming withal, is yet true and according to the mind of God, shall have leave, notwithstanding the antiquated statute of our university against it, to go and read logic at Stamford. On this account do but prove that a doctrine be not guilty of any one crime, and you may conclude that it is guilty of none. For instance, that doctrine which impeacheth not the omnipresence of the Deity is true and according to the Scripture, for the Scripture aboundeth with clear testimonies of the presence of God in all places; now the doctrine of the ubiquity of the human

nature of Christ doth no way impeach the omnipresence of the Deity: therefore it is true and according to Scripture!

I might supersede all farther considerations of this argument, having rendered it altogether useless and unserviceable in this warfare by breaking its right leg, or rather crutch, whereon it leaned. But something also may be added to the minor, because of its reflection in the close of its proof upon the doctrine we maintain, intimating an inconsistency of it with that excellency of God spoken of, namely, that he is no accepter of persons.

Prosopolepsia, or accepting of persons, is an evil in judgment, when he who is to determine in causes of righteousness hath respect to personal things, that concern not the merit of the cause in hand, and judgeth accordingly. This properly can have no place in God as to any bestowing of free grace, mercy, or pardon. There is room made for it only when the things that are bestowed or wrought by it are such as in justice are due; it being an iniquity solely and directly opposed to distributive justice, that rendereth to every one according to what is righteous and due.[1] That with God there be no accepting of persons there is no more required but this, that he appoint and determine equal punishments to equal faults, and give equal rewards to equal deservings. If he will dispose of his pardoning mercy and free grace to some in Christ, not to others, who shall say unto him, "What doest thou?" May he not do what he will with his own? So he giveth a penny to him that laboureth all day, he may give a penny also to him that worketh but one hour. Now, suppose that Mr Goodwin's doctrine render God free from this (or rather chargeth him not with it), yet if withal it calleth his truth, righteousness, faithfulness, oath, and immutability into question, shall it pass for a truth, or be embraced ever the sooner?

But the sting of this argument lieth in the tail or close of it, in the reflection insisted on upon the common doctrine of perseverance, as it is called, namely, that it teacheth God to be an accepter of persons. This is Mr Goodwin's way of arguing all along: When at any time he hath proposed a proof of the doctrine he goeth about to establish, finding that as something heavy work to lie upon his hand, and not much to be said in the case, he instantly turneth about and falleth upon his adversaries, in declaiming against whom he hath a rich and overflowing vein. There is scarce any one of his arguments in the pursuit and improvement whereof one fourth part of it is spoken to that head wherein he is engaged.

But wherein is the "common doctrine of perseverance" guilty of this great crime? It teacheth that "he that believeth shall be saved, and he that believeth not shall be damned." It teacheth that God hath allotted equal punishments to equal transgressions, and appointed

[1] Exod. xxiii. 2, 3, 6–9; Job xxxi. 34.

equal rewards to equal ways of obedience; that the wages of every sin is death, and that every sinner must die, unless it be those concerning whom God himself saith, "Deliver them, I have found a ransom," Job xxxiii. 24; that he is alike displeased with sin in whomsoever it is, and that in a peculiar and eminent manner when it is found in his own. Indeed, if this be to impute acceptation of persons to God, to say "that he hath mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth,"—that is, is tender to his own, as a father to his only child that serveth him, and will recover them (being faithful in his promises) from their sins, and heal their backslidings, though he suffer others to lie wallowing in their rebellions and pollutions all their days;—that he will not give pardon to any sinner but upon faith and repentance, but will give faith and repentance to those whom he hath chosen, and given unto Jesus Christ to be saved: if this, I say, be acceptance of persons, our doctrine owneth the imputation of ascribing it to God, and glorieth in it, we being ascertained that God taketh all this to himself clearly and plentifully in the word of truth.

The sum of what our author gives in to make good his charge upon the "common doctrine of perseverance" is, that it affirmeth "That though saints and believers fall into the same sins of adultery, and idolatry, and the like, with other men, yet they are not dealt withal as other men, but continued in the love and favour of God." To waive the consideration of the false impositions, by the way, on the doctrine opposed (as that is, that it teacheth the saints to fall into and to continue in them, to the significancy of that expression "Never so long," under abominations), and to join issue upon the whole of the matter, I say,—

1. That in and with this doctrine, and in perfect harmony and consistency therewith, we maintain that the *judgment of God is the same in respect of every sin*, in whomsoever it is, that he that doth it on that account is "worthy of death," Rom. i. 32. And,—

2. That *the sentence of the law is the same towards all*, cursing every one that continueth not in all things written in the book thereof to do them, Deut. xxvii. 26.

3. That in and under the gospel, wherein a remedy is provided in reference to the rigour and severity of both the former apprehensions, yet the Judge of all dealeth with all men *equally*, according to the tenor of it, "He that believeth shall be saved, and he that believeth not shall be damned." Men in the same condition shall have the same recompense of reward. But you will say, "Do not the same sins put men into the same condition, and deserve the same punishment in one as in another?"

Ans. 1. They do deserve the same punishment. God is equally provoked; and had not Christ answered for the sins of believers, they

could not, they should not, have escaped the wrath due to them. 2. That the same sins do not argue men always, under the gospel, to be in the same condition, as shall be afterward fully manifested; for, First, they do not find them in the same state. Some are in a state of death and sin, others of life and grace, being translated from the one to the other, having a title to the promise of mercy in Christ. Secondly, and chiefly, as there is a twofold justification, of the person and of the fact, and the one may be without the other, so there is a twofold condemnation, of disapprobation of the fact and of the person. As to the particular disapprobation of God in respect of any sinful act, it is the same in reference unto all persons, believers and unbelievers. As to their persons, there are in the gospel other ingredients to the judgment of them beside particular facts or acts, in answer to the law or the rule of righteousness,—namely, faith and repentance,—which alter the case of the person, even before the judgment-seat of God. To suppose the saints to fall into the same sins with other men in the same manner, and to continue in them without faith and repentance, is to beg the thing in question. Suppose them to have (what we affirm God hath promised) those conditions of evangelical mercy, and Mr Goodwin himself will grant it no acceptance of persons to deal otherwise with them than with others who have committed like sins with them in whom those conditions are not wrought or found; that is, "He that believeth shall be saved, he that believeth not shall be damned." This is all we say in this thing. But of the difference between believers and unbelievers in their sinning we shall speak afterward at large, to the full removal of this and another objection. For the present this shall suffice: Though believers fall, or may fall, into the same sins with other men, yet they fall not into them in the same manner with them, and they have a relief provided to prevent the deadly malignity of sin, which those who believe not have no interest in nor right unto.

Mr Goodwin's second argument is that which, of all others in this case, he seemeth to lay most weight upon, and which he pursueth at large in seventeen pages and as many sections, treating in it concerning *the ministry of the gospel*, and the usefulness of the exhortations, threatenings, and promises thereof. For an entrance into the consideration of it, I must needs say, "Non venit ex pharetris ista sagitta tuis." For besides that Mr Goodwin hath taken very little pains in the improvement of it (considering how it was provided to his hand by the Remonstrants at the Synod of Dort, and that which he hath done farther consisting in a mere useless and needless stuffing of it with sundry notions taken out of their first argument and fifth, "De modo conversionis," of the manner of the Spirit's operation in and upon the soul in its first conversion to God), it was the old song of the Pelagians and semi-Pelagians in their deal-

ing with Austin, Fulgentius, Hilarius, Prosper, and by them at large confuted; renewed by Castalio and Erasmus against Luther, after it had been sifted and rejected by the more learned schoolmen in former ages. Whatever it be, and however it is now come to hand, being taught to speak our language, and that in the best fashion, the consideration of it must not be declined. And thus it is proposed:—

"If the common doctrine of perseverance rendereth the ministry of the gospel, so far as it concerneth the perseverance of the saints, vain, impertinent, and void, then is it not a doctrine of God, but of men, and consequently that which opposeth it is truth; but certain it is that the said doctrine is of this unchristian tendency and import: *ergo.*" The first part of the consequent of the major is granted. The work of the ministry being for the "perfecting of the saints, and the edification of the body of Christ," Eph. iv. 12, 13, that which frustrateth the end whereunto of Christ himself it is designed can be no truth of his. Of the farther inference, that the doctrine which opposeth it, or is set up in opposition to it, is the truth, more will be spoken afterward. For the present, I cannot but insist upon the former observation, that, notwithstanding Mr Goodwin's pretence of proving and arguing for the doctrine he maintains, yet upon the matter he hath not any thing to say in the carrying on of that design, but instantly falls to his old work of raising objections,—in their very setting up prepared to be cast down, for the most part,—which with all his might he labours to remove.

The stress of the whole, as far as we are concerned in it, lieth on the minor, which is thus farther attempted to be made good. The minor proposition is demonstrated thus: "The doctrine which rendereth the labour and faithfulness of a minister, in pressing such exhortations, threatenings, and promises, which tend to the preservation of the saints in faith and holiness to the end, useless, rendereth the ministry of the gospel, as far as it concerneth the encouragement or enabling of the saints to persevere, needless and vain; but guilty of such a tendency as this is the commonly received doctrine of perseverance: *ergo.*"

Ans. This labour might have been saved, and both these syllogisms very easily reduced to one; but then another seeming argument, afterward, as we shall find, insisted on, would have been prevented. Our trade in such cases as this is by weight, and not by number. The minor, then, is still to be confirmed, which he laboureth thus to do:—

"The common doctrine of perseverance requireth and commandeth all saints or believers to be fully persuaded, and this with the greatest and most indubitable certainty of faith, that there is an absolute and utter impossibility either of a total or a final defection of their faith,—that though they should fall into ten thousand enormous and most

abominable sins, and lie wallowing in them, like swine in the mire, yet they should remain all the while in an estate of grace, and that God will, by a strong hand of irresistible grace, break them off from their sins by repentance before they die; but the doctrine which requireth and commandeth all this, and much more of like import, to be confidently believed by true believers, rendereth the pressing of all exhortations, threatenings, promises upon them, in order to prevail with them, or to make them carefully to persevere, bootless and unnecessary: *ergo.*"

Ans. What weight Mr Goodwin, with all those with whom, as to his undertaking under consideration, he is in fellowship, doth lay upon this argument is known to all. The whole foundation of what is afterward at large insisted on, for the establishment of it, being laid upon the proof of the minor proposition formerly denied, here laid down, it will easily be granted that it was incumbent on him to make sure work here, and not to leave any thing liable to any just exception. An error or a mistake in the foundation is not easily recoverable. All that is afterward heaped up beareth itself on a supposition of the truth of what is here delivered. If this fail in the least, we may spare our labour as to any farther consideration of what followeth. Now, the main of the proof here insisted on lieth in the declaration of that which he calleth the "common doctrine of perseverance;" and concerning this he informeth his reader,—

"That it commandeth all saints to be fully persuaded, and that with the greatest and most indubitable certainty of faith, that there is an absolute and utter impossibility either of a total or final defection of their faith."

Ans. What is the intendment of these aggravating expressions of "Fully persuaded," "Greatest and most indubitable certainty of faith," I know not. Will it please you if it should require them to be persuaded, but not fully persuaded; to believe it, but with little and dubitable certainty of faith, or uncertainty rather? Full persuasion, greatest certainty, without doubting or staggering, are all of them perfections of faith and of the saints in believing; which without doubt they are, in all that they are to believe, to press after. So that all this is no more but that this doctrine requireth men to believe what it affirmeth God to have promised. It requireth men to mix the promises of God with faith, *crimen inauditum.* "But though the manner of believing which it requireth be not blamable, yet the thing which it proposeth to be believed is false." What is that? "That there is *an absolute or utter impossibility either of a total or final defection of the faith of true believers.*" Its requiring this to be believed is the bottom and also corner-stone of Mr Goodwin's ensuing argument. If it doth not do this, he hath nothing in this place to say to it. Let him, then, produce any one that hath ever

wrote in the defence of it, that hath in terms, or by just consequence, delivered any such thing, and, *en herbam!* there shall be an end of this dispute. I presume Mr Goodwin knoweth what is meant by "an absolute and utter impossibility." An absolute repugnancy unto being, in the nature of the things themselves concerning which any affirmation is, and not any external or foreign consideration, doth entitle any thing to [be called] an absolute and utter impossibility. Did ever any one affirm that, in the nature of the thing itself, the defection of the saints is absolutely impossible? Is it not by them that believe the perseverance of the saints constantly affirmed that in themselves they are apt, yea, prone to fall away, and their faith to decay and die? which in itself possibly may be done, though Mr Goodwin cannot tolerably show how. The whole certainty of their continuance in, and of the preservation of, their faith, depends merely on supposition of something that is extrinsical in respect of them and of their state, which, as to their condition, might or might not be. Farther, the perseverance of the saints is by the same persons constantly affirmed to be carried on and to be perfected in and by the use of means. It is their "keeping by the power of God through faith unto salvation." And can, then, an absolute impossibility of their defection be asserted, or only that which is so upon supposition,—namely, of the purpose of God, etc.? There was no absolute impossibility that the bones of Christ should be broken, they being in themselves as liable to be broken as his flesh to be pierced; yet in respect of the event it was impossible they should be so. I cannot well imagine that Mr Goodwin is not fully persuaded, with *the greatest and most indubitable certainty* that a persuasion in things of this kind will admit, that the "common doctrine of perseverance" doth not require saints to believe that there is "an absolute impossibility of their defection," but only that God hath promised to preserve them from that which in themselves and in respect of any thing in them they are obnoxious unto, in and by the use of the means suited and appointed by him to the carrying on of that work and compassing of the end proposed. But yet it pleaseth him here to make show of a contrary apprehension; and to show his confidence therein he aggravates it with this annexed supposition and case: "It doth so," saith he, "though they should fall into ten thousand enormous and most abominable sins, and lie wallowing in them like swine in the mire, yet that they shall remain all the while in an estate of grace."

Ans. Truly this is such an enormous and an abominable calumny that I cannot but admire how any sober and rational man durst venture upon the owning of it. The question now is, what faith the doctrine insisted on ingenerates in particular persons, that should enervate and make void the exhortations, etc., of the ministry? Now, though the doctrine should teach this *indefinitely*, that though men

did sin so and so, as is here expressed, yet they should be kept in a state of grace, as is mentioned (which yet is loudly and palpably false, as hath been declared), yet that it doth require particular men to believe for themselves, and in reference to the guidance of their own ways, that they may "lie and wallow in their sin, like swine in the mire, and yet continue in a state of grace and acceptation with God," is so notoriously contrary to the whole tenor of the doctrine, the genius and nature of it, with all the arguments whereby it is asserted and maintained, that if conscience had but in the least been advised withal in this contest, this charge had been without doubt omitted. All that is produced for the confirmation of this strange imposition on the persuasion under consideration is his own testimony that makes the charge, "that it is the known voice of the common doctrine of perseverance;" and that being *said* is laid as a foundation of all that follows, the whole discourse still relating to a supposition that this is the doctrine which it opposeth, from the very next words to the end! Nor is there the least farther attempt for the confirmation of this grand assertion. But is this "the known voice" of our doctrine of perseverance? Who ever heard it but Mr Goodwin, and men of the like prejudicate spirit against the truth? The worst that can be charged with looking this way is its asserting the promised efficacy of the grace of God for the preserving of believers, by the use of means, from such wallowing in abominable sins as is supposed that it affirms they may be exposed unto. In brief, it says not,—first, That all believers are certain of their perseverance; nor, secondly, That any one can be certain of it upon such supposals as are here mentioned,—such a persuasion would not be from Him that calls them; nor, thirdly, That the end can be obtained without the use of means, though by them it shall certainly be so; but, fourthly, That all the hope of their perseverance is built on the promises of God to preserve them by and in the use of means. So that, in truth, there is no need of any farther process for the removing of the argument insisted on but only a disclaimer of the doctrine by it opposed, if it be that which is here expressed.

That, indeed, which Mr Goodwin hath to dispute against, if he will deal fairly and candidly in the carrying on of his design, is this:—"That the certainty of an end, to be obtained by means suited thereunto, doth not enervate nor render vain the use of those means appointed for the accomplishment of that end." The perseverance of the saints is the thing here proposed to be accomplished. That this shall be certainly effected and brought about, according to the promises of God for the effecting of it, God hath appointed the means under debate, to be managed by the ministry of the gospel. That the promise of God concerning the saints' perseverance, to be wrought and effected, as by others, so by these means in their kind, doth not

invalidate or render useless and vain the use of those means, but indeed establishes them, and ascribes to them their proper efficacy, is that which in this doctrine is asserted, and which Mr Goodwin ought to have disproved if he would have acquitted himself as a fair antagonist in this cause. The promise, we say, that Hezekiah had of the continuance of his life, did not make useless, but called for, the "plaster of figs" that was appointed for the healing of his sore, Isa. xxxviii. 5, 21.

I might then, as I said, save myself the labour of farther engaging for the casting down of this fabric, built on the sandy foundations of falsehood and mistake; but because something may fall in of that which followeth,—more indeed to the purpose than an orderly pursuit of those assertions laid down in the entrance would require, —that may more directly rise up against the cause in whose defence I am engaged, I shall consider the whole ensuing discourse; which, without doubt, will administer farther occasion for the illustration or confirmation of the truth in hand. He proceeds, then:—

"The reason of the minor is, because a certain knowledge and persuasion that God will, by an irresistible hand of power, preserve a man in the state of grace, how desperately careless, negligent, or wicked soever he shall be, clearly dissolves the usefulness and necessity of all other means whatsoever in reference to this end. If I know certainly that the corn which I have sown in my field will, whether I wake or sleep, grow and prosper, would it not be a very impertinent address for any man to come to me, and admonish me in a serious and grave manner to take heed I sleep not, but keep myself waking, lest my corn should not grow and prosper, or that it may grow and prosper? If my corn grows, thrives, and prospers, by the irresistible hand of God, by the course of a natural and standing providence, my watchfulness in order to a procurement of these things is absolutely vain," etc.

Ans. That this is not the doctrine which Mr Goodwin hath undertaken to oppose hath been more than once already declared. That he is not able with any colour of reason to oppose it, unless he first impose his own false and vain inferences upon it, and them upon his reader, for the doctrine itself, from his constant course of proceeding against it, is also evident. What advantage this is like in the close to prove to his cause, in the judgment of considerate men, the event will discover. The assertion of the stability of the promises of God in Jesus Christ given to believers, concerning his effectual preserving them to the end from such sins as are absolutely inconsistent with his grace and favour according to the tenor of the new covenant, or such continuance in any sin as is of the same importance, by his Spirit and grace, in the use of means, doth no way tend to the begetting in any a certain knowledge, assurance, and persuasion, that

God will continue them in a state of grace, "how desperately careless or wicked soever they shall be."

What is intended by the frequent repetition of this gross sophistry, or what success with the intelligent Christian ponderers of things he can hope for thereby, I am not able to guess; neither is any improvement in the least given to what the intendment of this argument is, so far as the "common doctrine of perseverance" is concerned therein, from the comparison ensuing instituted between the growth of corn and the walking of believers in obedience before God: for notwithstanding the identity in respect of the comparison of that expression "irresistible," which indeed is proper to neither, there is a wide difference between the growing of corn in a mere natural way, and the moral actings of an intelligent, rational creature. Whatever operations of God are about and in the one or the other, yet they are suited to the subjects about which they are. God carries on the growth of corn by a way of natural and necessary causes; but his acting of rational agents is by such ways and means as may entirely preserve their liberty,—that is, preserving them in their being, and leaving them to be such agents. As, then, God causeth the corn to grow by the shining of his sun and the falling of his rain, so he causeth believers to persevere in obedience by exhortations, promises, and threatenings, and such ways and means as are suited to such agents as they are. The fallacy of this discourse lies in an insinuation that God, by his effectual (or, as they are called, "irresistible") operations for the preservation of believers in gospel obedience (a thing he hath undertaken over and over to perform) doth change their nature, and render them, not free and intelligent agents, fit to be wrought upon by the proposal of suitable and desirable objects to their understandings, but mere brute and natural principles of all operations flowing from them; a conceit as gross and ridiculous as certainly destructive to all the efficacy of the grace of God. All the rest of this section, as far as it concerns us, is only an affirming, this way and that, that an assurance of the end to be obtained by the use of means renders those means altogether useless; which when he proves, the controversy may be nearer to an issue than otherwise he hath any reason to hope that it is, or will be to his advantage.

Sect. 4. Leaving the farther confirmation of his argument, he enters upon the removal of a plea insisted on to the justification of the doctrine opposed, and vindication of it from the crime wherewith here by him it is charged. This he tells you is, "That the exhortations, comminations, and promises spoken of, are means appointed of God for the accomplishing and effecting of the perseverance of the saints, which he hath made simply and absolutely necessary by his decree." "This," he saith, "hath neither any logical nor theological virtue in

it for the purpose for which it is produced, but is a notion irrelative to the business, the accommodation whereof it pretends."

Ans. It may be so. Suffer you to frame the objection, and who will doubt of your ability of giving an answer? But who, I pray, says that "God, by his decree, hath made the perseverance of the saints simply and absolutely necessary?" That it is certain in respect of the event, from the decree of God, we grant; but do we thereby overthrow the means whereby it is to be accomplished? yea, we establish them. We are of the mind that God hath purposed, and thereupon promised, the accomplishment of many things (as the selling of Joseph into Egypt, the bringing of the children of Israel from thence, and the like), which yet were to be carried on to their accomplishment and brought about through innumerable contingencies, by the free, rational, deliberative actings of men. If by "Simply and absolutely necessary" you intend that the thing decreed is to be wrought of men simply and absolutely necessarily by their operations, as to the manner of them, we simply and absolutely deny any such decree. If by those expressions you improperly intend only the certainty of the event, or accomplishment of the thing decreed, with respect to the means appointed and fitted thereunto, we say this establisheth those means; neither have they the nature of means to an end from any reason whatever, but as so appointed of God thereunto. But he proceeds in the proof of his former assertion, and says,—

"First, That the exhortations whereby the saints are exhorted to perseverance are no means by which the promises of perseverance made, as our adversaries suppose, to them are accomplished or effected, is thus clearly evinced: Whatsoever is a means for the bringing of any thing to pass ought not to contain any thing in it repugnant or contrary unto that which is intended to be brought to pass by it, for means ought to be subordinate to their ends, not repugnant; but the Scripture exhortations unto perseverance contain that which is repugnant to the promises of perseverance, if supposed such as our adversaries suppose them to be: therefore they can by no means effect those promises. The minor is evident by the light of this consideration. Such exhortations as these to the saints, 'Take heed lest at any time there be an evil heart of unbelief in you, lest you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin, lest you fall from grace, lest you receive the grace of God in vain, lest you fall from your own steadfastness,' in their native and proper tendency import a danger, and serve to raise a fear in men lest the danger imported should come upon them; whereas such promises as these, made unto the same persons, and that not conditionally, as is supposed, that there shall never be a heart of unbelief in them, that they shall never be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin, that they shall never fall away from the grace of God, exclude all danger or possibility of

falling away, and tend directly to prevent or extinguish all fear in men of any such danger: therefore, such exhortations are in their nature and genuine import contrary to such promises in theirs, and consequently can be no means of bringing them to pass."

Ans. 1. Exhortations are not so properly the means whereby the promises are accomplished as the means whereby the things mentioned in the promises are wrought, God by and through them stirring up those graces which he promises to work, continue, and to increase in his saints.

2. "Exhortations divine" must be so apprehended as to be subservient to an end, in respect of God foreknown and determined. It is true, we exhort men (or may) to those things of whose event we are wholly uncertain; but to God this cannot be ascribed. He doth foreknow and hath fore-determined the end and issue that every one of his exhortations shall have; and therefore such a nature, and no other, is to be ascribed to them as is consistent with and subservient to a determined end.

3. To the confirmation of his minor proposition the answer is easy, from the consideration, first, of the end of the exhortations insisted on unto perseverance, and then of the promises of perseverance themselves, which are no way inconsistent therewith. For the first, I say, those exhortations, "Take heed lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief," and the like, are not given to ingenerate a fear of falling away (which is a thing in itself evil and opposite unto that steadfastness of faith and full assurance which we should press unto, so far is it from any act of faithful obedience that God should aim to work in the hearts of his, and apply means thereunto), but only to beget a holy care and diligence in them to whom they are made or given for the using of the means appointed of God for the avoiding of the evil threatened to follow upon a neglect of them; which directly falls in and sweetly conspires with the end and use of the promises of perseverance by us urged and insisted upon. Nothing is imported by them but only the connection that is between the things mentioned in them, as unbelief and rejection from God. This God aims at in those exhortations, in their particular respect unto believers, that by them they may be stirred up to the use of those means which he hath appointed for them, to be by them preserved in the grace and mercy which he hath infallibly promised to continue to them. And,—

4. The end of the promises of perseverance on which we have insisted being their "mixing with faith," to establish the souls of the saints in believing the kindness and faithfulness of God in his covenant in Jesus Christ, they do not take away nor prevent all fear of perishing, and so, consequently, not that fear in any measure which stirs them up so to the use of means that they may not perish, but only are effectual for their deliverance out of those dangers

which are apt and able of themselves to destroy them; as our Saviour himself prays for them, John xvii. 15, "I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world" (where, whilst they are, they will be sure to meet with dangers and perplexities enough), "but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil," wherewith they must reckon to be exercised. There is not, then, the least contrariety or diverse aspect between the assurance of faith about the *end* which the promises tend unto, and the care and godly fear about the *means* instituted and appointed with respect to the end which exhortations do beget, and will, notwithstanding those promises.

5. The greatest inconsistency that can be imagined between exhortations and promises, as by us explained, is no more than this, that in one place God *promiseth* that unto us as his grace, which in another he *requires* of us as our duty; between which two whoever feigns an opposition, he doth his endeavour to set the covenant of grace, as to us proposed and declared, at variance with itself.

The whole ensuing discourse, unto sect. 12, drawing deep upon another controversy,—namely, "the manner of the operation of grace,"—and being for the most part borrowed from what is delivered on that head in the Arminian writings,[1] might be passed over as not of any necessary consideration in this place. What we assign to the exhortations of the word, and their consistency with whatever else we teach of the saints' perseverance, being already heard, this argument is at its proper issue. But the task undertaken is not to be waived or avoided; I shall therefore proceed to the discussion of it. Thus, then, he goes on:—

"If," saith he, "such exhortations as we speak of be a means to effect the perseverance which our adversaries suppose to be promised in the saints, then must the act of perseverance in the saints necessarily depend upon them, so as that it cannot, nor will, be effected without them; that is, without the saints submitting themselves to them: but persevering upon these terms clearly supposeth a possibility of non-persevering; for whatsoever dependeth upon a mutable condition, and which possibly may not be performed, may be also possible never to come to pass."

Ans. 1. Exhortations are improperly said to be "a means to effect perseverance." We say only that they are means to stir up, quicken, and increase, those graces in the exercise whereof the saints, according to the purpose and promise of God, do persevere.

2. The perseverance of the saints doth consist in the abiding and continuance of those graces in them which those exhortations do so stir up and further or increase; and in that regard there is a connection between the perseverance of the saints and the exhortations mentioned, yea, a dependence of the one on the other. But this

[1] Acta Synodal.

dependence ariseth not from the nature of the things themselves, whence such a certainty as is asserted would not arise, but from the purpose and appointment of God that they should be effectual to that end. And therefore,—

3. A "perseverance on these terms supposeth a possibility of non-persevering," if you regard only the nature of the things themselves, and set aside all consideration of the purpose and promises of God concerning the end, which is to beg the thing in hand; yea, the promise of God extends itself to the certain accomplishment of the saints' submission to those exhortations. So that the end aimed at doth not depend on a "mutable condition" (if I understand any thing of that expression, so unsuited to the business in hand), the performance of the condition (or the yielding of such obedience as is required to the essence of the saints' perseverance) being certain also from the promises of God.

His 5th section is as followeth: "If it be said that the said exhortations are means of the saints' persevering in this respect, because God by his Spirit irresistibly and unfrustrably draws and persuades the saints to obey these exhortations as means of their persevering, I answer, It cannot be proved that God doth draw or persuade his saints upon any such terms to obey these exhortations, nay, frequent experience showeth, and our adversaries' doctrine, frequently mentioned, expressly granteth, that the saints many times are so far from obeying these exhortations, that they walk for a long time in full opposition to them, as in security, looseness, vile practices. Nor have they yet proved, nor, I believe, ever will prove, but that they may walk, yea, and that many have thus walked, I mean in full opposition to the said exhortations, to their dying day. Secondly, If God by his Spirit irresistibly draws his saints to obey the exhortations we speak of, he thus draweth them either by such a force or power immediately acted upon their wills, by which they are made willing to obey them, or else he maketh use of the said exhortations so to work or affect their wills that they become willing accordingly. If the former be asserted, then, 1. The said exhortations are no means whereby the perseverance of the saints is effected, but God irresistibly by his Spirit: for if the will be thus immediately affected by God after such a manner, and wrought to such a bent and inclination, as that it cannot but obey the said exhortations, or do the things which the said exhortations require, then would it have done the same thing whether there had been any such exhortations in being or no, and consequently these exhortations could have no manner of efficiency about their perseverance; for the will, according to the common saying, is of itself 'a blind faculty,' and follows its own predominant bent and inclination, without taking knowledge whether the ways and actions towards which it stands bent be commanded

or exhorted unto by God or no. 2. If the will of a saint be immediately so affected by God that it stands inclined and bent to do the things which are proper to cause him to persevere, then is this bent and inclination wrought in the will of such a person after his being a saint, and consequently is not essential to him as a saint, but merely accidental and adventitious; and if so, then is there no inclination or bent in the will of a saint as such, or from his first being a saint, to persevere, or to do the things which accompany perseverance, but they come to be wrought in him afterward: which how consistent it is with the principles either of reason or religion, or their own, I am content that my adversaries themselves should judge. 3. If God doth immediately and irresistibly incline or move the wills of the saints to do the things which accompany perseverance, the said exhortations can be no means of effecting this perseverance; for the will, being physically and irresistibly acted and drawn by God to do such and such things, needeth no addition of moral means, such as exhortations are (if they be any), in order hereunto. What a man is necessitated to, he needeth no farther help or means to do it. 4. The things which accompany perseverance import a continuance in faith and love to the end. If, then, the wills of the saints be immediately and irresistibly moved by God thus to continue,—I mean in faith and love to the end,—what place is there for exhortations to come in with their efficiency towards that perseverance? Need they be exhorted to continue in faith and love, or to persevere after the end? Thus, then, we clearly see that the former of the two consequents mentioned cannot stand. God doth not by his Spirit irresistibly draw or move the wills of the saints to do the things which are necessary for the procuring their perseverance immediately, or without the instrumental interposure of the said exhortations."

Ans. First, the intendment of this, as also of some following sections, is to prove and manifest that the use of exhortations cannot consist with the efficacy of *internal grace*, and the work of the Spirit in producing and effecting those graces in us which in those exhortations we are provoked and stirred up unto;—a very sad undertaking truly, to my apprehension, and for which the church of God will scarce ever return thanks to them that shall engage in it! He was of another mind who cried, "Da, Domine, quod jubes, et jube quod vis." Yea, and the Holy Ghost hath, in innumerable places of Scripture, expressed himself of another mind, promising to work effectually in us what he requires earnestly of us; by the one manifesting the efficacy of his grace, by the other the exigency of the duty which is incumbent upon us. Nay, never any saint of God once prayed in his life, seeking any thing at the hand of God, but was of another mind, if he understood his own supplications. To what is here urged against this catholic faith of believers, I say,—

That exhortations are *the means of perseverance*, inasmuch as by them, in their place and kind, and with them, the Spirit of God effectually works this perseverance, or the matter of it, in the saints. Those cloudy expressions of "Irresistibly and unfrustrably" we own no farther than as they denote the certainty of the event, and not the manner of the Spirit's operation; which also they do very unhandsomely. We leave out, then, in the proposal of our judgment about the use of exhortations, which Mr Goodwin opposeth, those terms, and add in their room, "By and with those exhortations," which he omits.

He saith, then, "This cannot be proved, because the saints live and die oftentimes in opposition and disobedience unto these exhortations."

But obedience is twofold: First, As to the general frame of the heart,—obedience in the habit; and so it is false that the saints live at any time in an ordinary course, much less die in opposition to those exhortations. The law of God being written in their hearts, and they delighting in it in their inward man, they abide therein, the fruit of obedience for the most part being brought forth by them: and this sufficeth as to their perseverance. Secondly, It regardeth particular acts of obedience; and in respect of them we all say that yet they all sin ("Optimus ille est, qui minimis urgetur"): but this prejudiceth not their perseverance, nor the general end of the exhortations afforded them for that purpose.

But he adds, secondly, "If God by his Spirit irresistibly draws his saints to persevere," *ut supra.*

But this is sorry sophistry, "which may be felt," as they say, "through a pair of mittens;" for,—

1. Who says that God works by *force* immediately upon the wills of men? Or who makes *force* and *power* to be terms equivalent? or says that God cannot put forth the "exceeding greatness of his power in them that believe," but he must force or compel their wills? or, that he cannot "work in us both to will and to do of his good pleasure," immediately working in and with our wills, but he must so force them?

2. Whence ariseth the disjunctive force of this argument, "Either by immediate actings upon their wills, or he maketh use of those exhortations?" as though the one way were exclusive of the other, and that the Scripture did not abundantly and plentifully ascribe both these unto God; both that he exhorts us to know him, love him, believe in him, and gives us an understanding and a heart so to do, working faith and love in us by the exceeding efficacy of his power and Spirit. I say, then, that God works immediately by his Spirit in and on the wills of his saints; that is, he puts forth a real physical power that is not contained in those exhortations,

though he doth it by, and in, and with them. The impotency that is in us to do good is not amiss termed *ethico-physica*, both natural and moral; and the applications of God to the soul in their doing good are both really and physically efficient and moral also, the one consisting in the efficacy of his Spirit, the other lying in the exhortations of the word, yet so as that the efficacy of the Spirit is exerted by and with the moral efficacy of the word, his work being but grace or the law in the heart, the word being the law written. So that all the ensuing reasonings are bottomed upon things *male divisa*, that stand in a sweet harmony and compliance with each other.

But Mr Goodwin tells you, "That if God work by his Spirit and his grace immediately on the wills of men, to cause them to persevere, then are exhortations no means of their perseverance."

Why so, I pray? It seems we must have no internal effectual grace from God, or no outward exhortations of the word; but he tells you it must be so, "Because if the will be physically and irresistibly acted and drawn by God to do such and such things, it needeth no addition of moral means; such are exhortations thereunto." That is, if the will be effectually inclined to the ways of God by his grace, there is then no need of the exhortations of the word. But yet,—

1. The Spirit of God, though he has an immediate efficacy of his own by and with those exhortations, yet by those exhortations he also inclines the will; and as he works on the will as corrupt and impotent by his grace, so he works on the will (as the will, or as such a faculty, is apt to be wrought upon by a mediation of the understanding) by exhortations.

2. To say, "Obedience would have been produced and wrought had there been no exhortations," is not required of us, what efficacy soever we ascribe to grace, unless we also deny exhortations to be appointed of God and to be used by the Spirit of God for the producing of that obedience. Neither,—

3. Doth God work upon the will as a distinct faculty alone of itself, without suiting his operations to the other faculties of the soul; nor is grace to be wrought or carried on in us merely as we have wills, but as we have understandings also, whereby the exhortations he is pleased to use may be conveyed to the will and affect it in their kind. In a word, this is but repeating what was said before, "If there be any effectual grace, there is no use of exhortations; or if exhortations be the means of continuing or increasing grace, what need the efficacy of grace or immediate actings of the Spirit, 'working in us to will and to do of God's good pleasure?'" What validity there is in these inferences will be easily discerned. God worketh grace in men as men, and as men impotent and corrupt by sin. As men he works upon them by means suited to their rational being,—by precepts and exhortations; but as men impotent and corrupt by

sin, they stand in need of his effectual power to work that in them which he requireth of them. Of the terms wherewith his arguing in this case is clouded and darkened, enough hath been remarked already.

His second argument to this purpose, namely, "That the inclination of the will to good and to persevere in a saint must be after his being made a saint," is as weak and no less sophistical than the former. That inclination is radically wrought in every believer at his conversion, the Spirit being bestowed on him, which shall abide with him for ever, and the seed of God laid in his heart, that shall remain and never utterly fail, with an habitual inclination to the exercise of all those graces wherein their persevering doth consist. Actually this is wrought in them according to the particular duties and actings of grace that are required of them; which they are carried forth unto by the daily influence of life, power, and grace, which they receive from Christ their head, without whom they can do nothing.

Neither is the third exception of any more validity, being only a repetition of what was spoken before, rendered something more impedite, dark, and intricate, by the terms of "physically," "irresistibly," and "necessitated;" which how far and wherein we do allow hath been frequently declared. The sum of what is spoken amounts to this, "God's real work in and upon the soul by his Spirit and grace is inconsistent with exhortations to obedience;" which we have before disproved, and do reject it as an assertion destructive to all the efficacy of the grace of God and the whole work of it upon the souls of men.

What his fourth argument also is but a repetition of the same things before crudely asserted in other terms, let them apprehend that can: "If God work faith and love in the hearts of his saints, and support them in them to the end, what place is left for exhortations?" I say, Their own proper place, the place of means, of means appointed by God to stir up his to perseverance, and which himself makes, by his Spirit and the immediate efficacy thereof, effectual to that end and purpose. And I know no use of that query, "Are exhortations effectual to persuade men to persevere after the end?" it being built only on his false hypothesis and begging of the thing in question, namely, "That if God work faith and love, and continuance of them, in our hearts effectually by his grace, there is no need, no use of exhortations," though God so work them by and with those exhortations.

And this is his first attempt upon the first member of the division made by himself, wherein what success he hath obtained is left to the judgment of the reader; and but that I shall not,—having now the part of one that answers incumbent on me,—turn aside unto the proof of things denied, I should easily confirm what hath been given

in for the removal of his objections from the testimony of God, by innumerable places of Scripture.

He proceeds, then, sect. 6, and says, "Secondly, Neither can the latter of the said consequences stand. God doth not make use of the said exhortations to influence or affect the wills of the saints upon any such terms as thereby to make them infallibly, unfrustrably, necessitatingly, willing to persevere, or to do the things upon which perseverance dependeth.

"For, first, If so, then one and the same act of the will should be both physical and moral, and so be specifically distinguished in and from itself. For so far as it is produced by the irresistible force or power of the Spirit of God, it must needs be physical, the said irresistible working of the Spirit being a physical action, and so not proper to produce a moral effect. Again, as far as the said exhortations are means to produce or raise this act of the will, or contribute any thing towards it, it must needs be moral, because exhortations are moral causes, and so not capable of producing physical, natural, or necessary effects. Now, then, if it be impossible that one and the same act of the will should be both physical and moral,—that is, necessary and not necessary,—impossible also it is that it should be produced by the irresistible working of God and by exhortations of this joint efficiency.

"It may be objected, 'They who hold or grant such an influence or operation of the Spirit of God upon the will which is frustrable or resistible, do and must suppose it to be a physical action as well as that which is irresistible. If so, then the act of the will, so far as it is raised by the means of this action or operation of God, must, according to the tenor of the former argument, be physical also, and so the pretended impossibility is no more avoided by this opinion than by the other.'

"I answer, Though such an operation of God upon the will as is here mentioned be, in respect of God and of the manner of its proceeding from him, physical, yet, in respect of the nature and substance of it, it is properly moral; because it impresseth and affecteth the will upon which it is acted after the manner of moral causes, properly so called,—that is, persuadingly, not ravishingly or necessitatingly. When a minister of the gospel in his preaching presseth or persuadeth men to such and such duties or actions, this act, as it proceedeth from him,—I mean, as it is raised by his natural abilities of understanding and speaking,—is physical or natural, but in respect of the substance or native tendency of it it is clearly moral, namely, because it tendeth to incline or move the wills of men to such or such elections without necessitating them thereunto; and so comports with those arguments or exhortations, in their manner of efficiency, by which he presseth or moveth them to such things. By the way, to prevent

stumbling and quarrelling, it no way follows from the premises that a minister in his preaching or persuading unto duties should do as much as God himself doth in or towards the persuading of men hereunto. It only follows that the minister doth co-operate with God (which the apostle himself affirms) in order to one and the same effect; —that is, that he operateth in one and the same kind of efficiency with God, morally or persuadingly, not necessitating; for where one necessitates and another only persuades, they cannot be said to co-operate or work the one with the other, no more than two, when the one runs and the other walks a soft pace, can be said to go or walk together. But when two persuade in one and the same action, one may persuade more effectually by many degrees than the other, may have a peculiar tact or method of persuading above the other."

That which is now undertaken to be proved is, that God doth not make use of exhortations as means for the establishing of the saints in believing and for confirming their perseverance. This is that which by us is assigned unto them, and this is all that the nature of them doth require that they should be used unto, the certainty of the event whereunto they are applied depending not on their nature, as such means, but on the purpose of God to use them for that end which he hath designed and promised to bring about and accomplish.

Before he ventures on any opposition to the intendment of this assertion, he phraseth it so as either to render it unintelligible to himself and others, or (if any thing be signified by the expressions he useth) to divert it wholly from the mind of them and their sense with whom he hath to do. Who ever said that "God by exhortations doth influence the wills of men upon such terms as to make them unfrustrably and necessitatingly willing to persevere?" Or, can he tell us what is the meaning of these terms, "Unfrustrably, necessitatingly willing to persevere?" Though it is easy to guess at what he here intends, yet it is far above my shallow capacity to reach the sense of these expressions. How any of these terms, relating to the event and issue of things, [are used,] and in what sense they may be used, I have often showed. As relating either to the manner of God's operation in and upon the will, or the will's elicitation of its own act (any farther than by relation to that axiom, "Unumquodque quod est, dum est, necesse est"), they express neither our sense nor any body's else that I know. That which I shall make bold to take up for Mr Goodwin's intendment is, that God doth not by exhortations effectually cause the saints to persevere. To be willing to persevere is to persevere; to be "necessitatingly willing" is I know not what. Now, if such an efficacy be ascribed to exhortations as teaches the certainty of the effect, so that the certainty of the effect as to the event should be asserted to depend on them as such means, this is nothing to us. We ascribe an efficacy to them *in proprio genere*, but the certainty

of that event to whose production they concur, we affirm, as hath been abundantly declared, to depend on other causes.

But the proof of what is here asserted outruns for uncouth strangeness the assertion itself, *equis albis*, as they say; for, saith he, "If this be so" (that is, "as you have heard above"—how, neither he nor we know), "then the same act of the will should be both physical and moral." And,—

1. Why so? "Because physical and moral means are used for the producing of it!"—as though sundry causes of several kinds might not concur to produce one uniform effect, far enough from a necessity of receiving so much as a denomination from each of them. In the concurrence of several causes, whereof some may be free and contingent, others natural and necessary, the effect absolutely follows its next and immediate cause alone. God causes the sun to shine freely, yet is the shining of the sun a necessary effect of the sun, and not any way free or contingent. God determined the piercing of Christ's side, and so as to the event made it necessary, but yet was the doing of it in them that did it free as to the manner of its doing, and no way necessary. But,—

2. Suppose the same act of the will should be said to be both physical and moral upon several accounts? And what if every act of the will in and about things good or bad be so, and it be utterly impossible it should be otherwise? "Yea, but then the same act should be specifically distinguished in and from itself."

Yea, but who told you so? The terms of "physical and moral," as related to the acts of the will, are very far from constituting different kinds or species of acts, being only several denominations of the same individual acts upon several regards and accounts. The acts of the will as they flow from that natural faculty, or are elicited thereby, are all *physical*, but as they relate to a law whence they are good or evil, they are *moral;* the one term expresseth their *being*, the other their *regularity* and conformity to some rule whereunto their agents are obliged. "Quid dignum tanto?" If by "physical and moral" Mr Goodwin intends "necessary and free," (being the first that ever abused these words, and in that abuse of them not consistent with himself, affirming afterward the act of a minister's preaching, as proceeding from his abilities of understanding and speaking, to be physical or natural, which yet he will not aver to be necessary, but free), he should have told us so; and then, though we would not grant that the same act may not in several respects be both necessary and free, the latter in respect of the manner of its performance and nature of its immediate cause, the former in respect of the event and the determination of its first cause, yet its consequent is so palpably false, as to the advancing of his former assertion, that it would have been directly denied, without any farther trouble

But he adds, "It must needs be physical, because it is produced by the physical working of the Spirit of God, which, being a physical action, cannot produce a moral effect."

Ans. By physical operation of God on and with the will, we understand only that which is really and effectually so, as different from that which is only moral and by way of motive and persuasion. Now, this we say is twofold; the first consisting in the concourse of God, as the first cause and author of all beings, to the producing of every entity, such as the acts of the wills of men are, and this in such a way as is not only consistent with the liberty of the will in all its acts and actings whatever, but also as is the foundation of all the liberty that the will hath in its actings. And in respect of this influence of God, the effect produced is only physical or natural, having such a being as is proper to it; as also it is in respect of the will itself, and its concurrence in operation. The other is that which Mr Goodwin here calls "The irresistible force or power of the Spirit," distinguishing the efficacy of the Spirit and grace of God in their working in us to will and to do, producing those effects as they are good and gracious, in reference to their rise, end, and rule, whereunto they are related. This, then, is that which by Mr Goodwin is here asserted, "That if there be such an effectual real working of the Spirit and grace of God in us to the producing of any acts of the wills of men, they cannot be moral;" that is, they cannot have any goodness in them beyond that which is entitative. And so far are we now arrived: All efficacious working of the Spirit of God on us must be excluded, or all we do is good for nothing. Away with all promises, all prayers, yea, the whole covenant of grace; they serve for no other end but to keep us from doing good. Let us hear the Scripture speak a little in this cause: Deut. xxx. 6, "The LORD thy God will circumcise thine heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, that thou mayest live." Jer. xxxi. 33, "This shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people." Chap. xxxii. 39, "I will give them one heart, and one way, that they may fear me for ever, for the good of them, and of their children after. them." Ezek. xxxvi. 26, 27, "A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them." Acts xvi. 14, "The Lord opened the heart of Lydia, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul." Phil. i. 29, "Unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his

sake;" and chap. ii. 13, "It is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." As also Eph. i. 18–20, "That ye may know what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead." And, 2 Thess. i. 11, "We pray always for you, that our God would fulfil all the good pleasure of his goodness, and the work of faith with power." So also in 2 Cor. v. 17, "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature;" for, Eph. ii. 4, 5, "God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ," causing us, chap. iv. 24, to "put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness;" with the like assertions, John iii. 3; James i. 18; 1 Pet. i. 23; John v. 21; 2 Cor. iii. 5, etc.

What may be thought of these and the like expressions? Do they hold out any real, effectual, internal work of the Spirit and grace of God distinct from moral persuasion, or do they not? If they do, how comes any thing so wrought in us and by us to be *morally* good? If they do not, we may bid farewell unto all renewing, regenerating, assisting, effectual grace of God. That God, then, by his Spirit and grace, cannot enable us to act morally and according to a rule, is not yet proved. What follows?

Saith he, "So far as exhortations are means to produce these acts, they must be moral; for moral causes are not capable of producing natural or physical effects."

But if Mr Goodwin think that, in this controversy, "physical" and "necessary," as applied to effects, are *ἰσοδυναμοῦντα*, he is heavenly wide. "Physical" denotes only their being "necessary," a manner of being as to some of them which have physically a being. The term "natural" is ambiguous, and sometimes used in the one sense, sometimes in the other; sometimes it denotes that which *is* only, sometimes that which *is in such a kind*. By a physical effect, we understand an effect with respect to its real existency; as by a moral effect, an effect in respect of its regularity. And now, why may not a moral cause have an influence, in its own kind, to the production of a physical effect; I mean, an influence suited to its own nature and manner of operation, by the way of motive and persuasion? What would you think of him that should persuade you to lift your hand above your head to try how high you could reach, or whether your arm were not out of joint?

Secondly, It hath been sufficiently showed before, that with these exhortations, which work as *appointed means, morally* God exerteth an effectual power for the real production of that whereunto the exhortation tends; dealing thus with our whole souls suitably to the nature of all their faculties, as every one of them is fitted and suited to be wrought upon for the accomplishment of the end he aims at,

and in the manner that he intends. Briefly, to every act of the will as an act, *in genere entis*, there is required a really operative and physical concurrence of the providential power of God, in its own order as the first cause; to every act as good or gracious, the operative concurrence and influence of the Spirit of grace;—which yet hinders not but that by exhortations men may be provoked and stirred up to the performance of acts as such, and to the performance of them as good and gracious.

This being not the direct controversy in hand, I do but touch upon it. Concerning that which follows, I should perhaps say we have found *anguem in herba;* but being so toothless and stingless as it is to any that in the least attend to it, it may be only termed the pad in the straw.[1] "Physical and moral" are taken to be terms, it seems, equipollent to "necessary and not necessary;" which is such a wresting of the terms themselves and their known use as men shall not likely meet withal. Hence is it that acts physical and necessary are the same. Every act of the most free agent under heaven, yea, in heaven or earth, is in its own nature and being physical. Acts also are moral, that is, good or evil, consequently in order of nature to their existence (of which "necessary" or "not necessary" are the adjunct manner), in reference to the rule or law whereunto their conformity is required. How "moral" and "not necessary" come to be terms of the same import Mr Goodwin will declare perhaps hereafter, when he shall have leisure to teach as much new philosophy as he hath already done divinity. In the meantime, we deny that any influence from God on the wills of men doth make any act of them necessary as to the manner of its production. And so this first argument for the inconsistency of the use of exhortations, with the real efficiency of the grace and Spirit of God is concluded.

That which follows in this section to the end is a pretended answer to an objection of our author's own framing, being only introduced to give farther advantage to express himself against any real efficiency of the Spirit or grace of God *in* the hearts or *on* the wills of men. Not to insist upon his darkening the discourse in hand, from his miserable confounding of those terms "physical" and "moral," formerly discovered, I shall, as near as I can, close with his aim in it, for the more clear consideration thereof:—

First, he tells us, "That the operation of God on the will of man is, in respect of its proceeding from him, physical; but in respect of its nature and substance, it is properly moral."

1. But first, If a man should ask Mr Goodwin what he intends by this "operation of God on the will of man," to the end intended, I fear he would be very hard put to it to instance in any particular. It is

[1] A phrase explained by Halliwell to mean "something wrong, a screw loose;" but he gives no account of its origin.—Ed.

sufficiently evident he acknowledgeth none in this kind but what consists in the exhortations of the word.

2. Having told us before that "physical" is as much as "necessary," and "moral" as "not necessary," how comes it about that the same operation of God, the same act of his power, is become in several regards *physical* and *moral*,—that is, *necessary* and *not necessary?* Is Mr Goodwin reconciled to the assertion that the same thing may be said to be necessary and not necessary in sundry respects?

3. How comes the same act or operation in respect of its *manner* of proceeding from its agent to be physical, and in respect of its *substance* to be moral? or, is any act moral in respect of its substance, or is its morality an adjunct of it, in respect of the regard it hath to some rule and farther end? It is an easy thing for any to heap up such crude assertions, and in the meantime not to know what they say nor whereof they do affirm. But the reason why the acts of God intimated are moral is, "because they persuade the will only, or work persuadingly, not ravishingly or necessitatingly." That is, in plain terms, there is no operation of the grace or Spirit of God in the working of any good in the hearts or wills of men, but only what consisteth in persuasion of them thereunto. For any real efficiency as to the communication of strength in "working in us to will and to do," it is wholly excluded. God only persuades, men have the power in themselves, and of themselves they do it, let the Scripture say what it will to the contrary. For those terms of "ravishingly or necessitatingly," which are opposed to this moral persuasion, whereunto the operations of God for the production of any good in us are tied up and confined, we have been now so inured to them that they do not at all startle us. When Mr Goodwin shall manifest that God cannot, by the greatness of his power, work in us to will without ravishing our wills, if we guess aright at the intendment of that expression, he will advance to a considerable success in this contest, not only against us, but God himself.

But an objection presents itself to our author, which he sees a necessity to attempt the removal of, lest an apprehension of its truth should prove prejudicial to the receiving of his dictates; and this is, "That if it be so, that God worketh on the will of man by the way of persuasion only, he doth no more than the ministers of the gospel do, who persuade men by the word to that which is good." To this he tells you, "That it indeed follows that God and ministers work on the will of man in the same way, with the same kind of efficiency; but yet in respect of degrees, God may persuade more effectually than a minister."

1. That all really efficient, internal, working grace of God was denied by Mr Goodwin, was before discovered; here only it is more plainly asserted: "All the workings of God on the wills of men unto

good are merely by persuasion." Persuasion, we know, gives no strength, adds no power, to him that is persuaded to any thing. It only provokes him and irritates him to put forth, exert, and exercise, the power which is in himself unto the things whereunto he is persuaded, upon the motives and grounds of persuasion proposed to him; and the whole effect produced, on that account, is *in solidum* to be ascribed to the really efficient cause of it, howsoever incited or stirred up. Whereas, then, men by nature are dead, blind, unbelieving, enemies to God, he only persuades them to exert the power that is in them, and thereby to live, see, believe, and be reconciled to him. And this is to exalt the free grace of God by Jesus Christ! We know full well who have gone before you in these paths, but shall heartily pray that none of the saints of God may follow after you into this contempt of the work of his grace. But,—

2. If nothing but persuasion be allowed to God in the work of men's conversion, and in the carrying on of their obedience to the end, wherein doth the persuasion of God consist, in distinction from the persuasion used in and from the word by ministers, which it is pretended that it *may* excel (though it is not affirmed that it *doth*) by many degrees? Let it be considered, I say, in what acts of the will, or power of God, his persuasion, so distinct as above mentioned, doth consist; let us know what arguments he useth, by what means he applies them, how he conveys them to the wills of men, that are not coincident with those of the ministry. I suppose at last it will be found that there is no other operation of God in persuading men, as to the ends under consideration, but only what lies or consists in the persuading of the word by the ministers thereof, God looking on without the exerting of any efficacy whatever; which is indeed that which is aimed at, and is really exclusive of the grace of God from any hand in the conversion of sinners or preservation of believers.

3. He doth not, indeed, assert any such persuading of God, but only tells you that from what he hath spoken "it doth not follow that God doth no more than ministers in persuading men, and that when two persuade to one and the same action, one may be more effectual in his persuading than another;" but that God is so, or how he is so, or wherein his peculiar persuasions do consist, there is not in his discourse the least intimation.

4. There is in men a different power as to persuasion, some having a faculty that way far more eminent and effectual than others, according to their skill and proficiency in oratory and persuasive arts. This only is ascribed to God, that he so excels us as one man excels another; but how that excellency of his is exerted, that is not to be understood. But there is proof tendered you of all this from 1 Cor. iii. 9, where ministers are said to "co-operate with God, which they cannot do unless it be with the same kind of

efficiency," (well said!) "and that when one works necessitatingly and another by persuasion, they cannot be said to co-operate, no more than one that runs and another that walks can be said to walk together." Certainly our author never dreamed that any man whatever would put himself to the trouble of examining these dictates, or he would have been more wary of his asserting them, and we had not had so much, not only new and strange divinity, but new and uncouth philosophy, heaped up without any considerable endeavour of proof or confirmation.

(1.) That two agents cannot concur or co-operate to the producing of the same effect but with the same kind of efficiency is a rare notion indeed. Was he never persuaded to do any thing in his life? What thinks he of David and the Ammonites' killing of Uriah? of a judge and an executioner slaying a malefactor? of God and Satan moving David to number the people? of God and Joseph's brethren sending him to Egypt? But what need I mention instances? Who knows not that this so confounds all causes efficient, and that principal and instrumental, material, final, formal, which in their production of effects have all their distinct efficiency, and yet their co-operation?

(2.) The proof from the Scripture mentioned extends only to the interesting of ministers in the great honour of co-operating with God in the work of begetting and increasing faith in their own sphere, according to the work to them committed; but that God and they do work with the same kind of efficiency, it is the main intendment of the apostle in the place cited (1 Cor. iii.) to disprove. He tells you, indeed, there is a work of planting and watering committed to the ministers of the gospel; but the giving of increase (a peculiar working with a distinct kind of efficiency), that is alone to be ascribed to God. It is, I say, his design (who everywhere abundantly informs us that "faith is the gift of God, wrought in us by the exceeding greatness of his power") to prove in this place that though the dispensation of the word of the gospel be committed unto men, yet their whole ministry will be vain and of none effect, unless, by an immediate efficacy or working of his Spirit, giving and bestowing faith on his elect, God do give an increase.

(3.) For the term of "necessitating," put upon the real effectual work of God's grace on the wills of men, giving them power and assistance, and working in them to will and to do, as different from that which is purely moral or persuasive only, which communicates no strength or power, I shall need no more but to reject it with the same facility wherewith it is imposed on us. The similitude of one walking and another running, wherewith [he sets forth] the inconsistency of a real efficient work of grace with persuasion, so far as that they should be said to co-operate to the producing of the same effect,

doth not in the least illustrate what it is intended to set off; for though one run and another go softly (as suppose one carrying a little loaf, another a great burden of meat, for a supper), and both going to the same place, why may not they be said to co-operate to the providing of the same supper? Must all agents that co-operate to the producing of the same effect be together in one place? You may as soon bring heaven and hell together as prove it. And why must real efficiency be compared to "running," and persuasion to "soft walking?" as though one were supposed to carry on the work faster than the other, when we only say, that in the one there is a distinct power exerted from what is in the other; which that it may be done might be proved by a thousand instances, and illustrated by as many similitudes, if any pleasure were taken to abound in *causâ facili*. God and man then co-operate in respect of the tendency of their working unto the event, not in respect of the kinds of their efficiency.

Of the 7th section (whereon we shall not need long to insist), which in the entrance frames an objection and pretends an answer to it, there are three parts. In the first he says that we affirm "That though the will be necessitated by God, yet it is free in its election; which, how it may be, he understands not." But if this were all the inconvenience, that Mr Goodwin could not understand how to salve the operation of God in man with the liberty of his will, seeing as wise men as himself have herein been content to captivate their understandings to the obedience of faith, it were not much to be stumbled at; but the truth is, the chimera whose nature he professeth himself unacquainted withal is created in his own imagination, where it is easy for every man to frame such notions as neither himself nor any else can bring to a consistency with reason or truth. Of necessitating the will to election we have had occasion more than once already to treat, and shall not burden the reader with needless repetitions.

In the second division of the section, he gives you his judgment of the manner of the work of God upon the soul unto the doing of that which is good, and the effect produced thereby: whereof the one, as was said before, consists in persuasions, which he says "are thus far irresistible, that they who are to be persuaded cannot hinder but that God may persuade them or exhort them, though he prevail not with them;"—which, doubtless, is a notable exaltation of his grace. Thus Mr Goodwin works *irresistibly* with one or other, perhaps, every day. And "the effect of this persuasion is" (that is, when it is effectual) "that impression which it leaves upon the soul to the things whereunto it is persuaded;" as the case is in the dealing of men one with another. For my part, I see no reason why our author should so often so heedfully deliver his judgment concerning this thing, especially without the least attempt of any scriptural proof or

endeavour to answer those innumerable clear and express places of Scripture which he knows are everywhere and on all occasions produced and insisted on to prove a real efficient acting of God in and with the wills of men, for the producing, working, and accomplishing, that which is good, in a way distinct from that of persuasion, which contributes no real strength to the person persuaded, concurring only *metaphorically* in the producing of the effect. Let this at last, then, suffice. We are abundantly convinced of his denial of the work of God's grace in the salvation of souls.

In the third place we have a rhetorical flourish over that which he hath been laying out his strength against all this while, being a mere repetition of what hath been already tendered and given in to consideration over and over. "If God cause the saints effectually to persevere" (his terms of "irresistibly" and "necessitating" have been long since discharged from any farther attendance or service in this warfare) "by exhortations, then are all his promises of perseverance in vain." But why so? May not God enjoin the use of *means*, and promise by them the attainment of the *end?* May he not promise that *to* us which he will work himself effectually *in* us? If God effectually work in us to give us, by what means soever, a new heart, may he not promise to give us a new heart? "Yea, but amongst men this would be incongruous, yea, ridiculous, that a father should promise his son an inheritance, and then persuade him to take heed that he may obtain it."

But, first, If this be "incongruous, yea, ridiculous," amongst men, in their dealings with one another, doth it therefore follow that it must be so as to God's dealings with men? "Are his thoughts as our thoughts, and his ways as our ways?" Is not the wisdom of God foolishness with men, and theirs much more so with him? Are men bound in their dealings with others to consider them not only in their *natural* and *civil* relations, but as *impotent* and *corrupted* men, as God in his dealings with them doth?

Secondly, Neither is this course so ridiculous amongst men as Mr Goodwin imagineth. That a father, having promised his son an inheritance, and instated it on him, or assured it to him, should exhort and persuade him to behave himself worthy of his kindness, and to take heed that he come to the enjoyment of the inheritance which he hath provided for him by the means that he hath appointed (for the prescription of means for the enjoyment of the inheritance must be supposed to go along with the promise and assurance), is far from being a course so ridiculous as is pretended.

Neither, thirdly, is this similitude analogous with that which it is produced to illustrate; for,—1. A man may know how, and when, and on what account, an inheritance is settled on him by his father; but of what God promiseth we have faith only, not knowledge, properly

so called; nor always the *assurance* of faith as to the enjoyment of the thing promised, but the *adherence* of faith, as to the truth and faithfulness of the promiser. Nor,—2. Can a father work in his son that obedience which he requireth of him, as He can do who creates a new heart in us, and writes his law and fear therein. 3. This absolute engagement to bestow an inheritance, whether the means of obtaining it be used and insisted on or no, is a thing most remote from what we ascribe to the Lord in his promises of perseverance, which are only that believers shall persevere by the use of means; which means he exhorts them to use, and yet, dealing with them in a covenant of grace and mercy, entered into upon account of their utter insufficiency in themselves to do the things that are well pleasing to him, whereunto they are so exhorted, he himself effectually and graciously, according to the tenor of that covenant, works in them what he requires of them, bearing them forth in the power of his grace to the use of the means appointed.

His sections 8 and 9 contain an endeavour for the taking off an instance usually given of pressing to the use of means, when the end is infallibly promised to be accomplished and brought about in and by the use of those means; and this is in the passage of Paul, Acts xxvii. 21–36, whereof something formerly hath been spoken. Paul receives a promise from God, that none of the lives of the persons with him in the ship should perish. This he declares to his company; and how deeply he was concerned in the accomplishment of the promise, and his prediction thereupon, upon the account of the undertaking wherein, against almost all the world, he was then engaged, and the cause for which he was committed to their company and custody, was formerly declared. Notwithstanding this, he afterward exhorts them, and directs to the use of all means imaginable that were suitable for the fulfilling of the promise he had, and the prediction he had made. Evident it is, then, that there is no inconsistency, nor any thing unbecoming any perfection in God, in that compliance of promises and exhortations which we insist upon, he having directed Paul to walk in that very way and path. God, we say, in the covenant of grace hath promised that his saints shall never leave him nor forsake him, and that he will abide in unchangeable constancy to be their God,—that he will preserve them and keep them in his hand unto the kingdom of his Son in glory, saving his redeemed ones with an everlasting salvation, to the accomplishment of the end promised; which he will, upon the account of his truth and faithfulness, bring about by means suitable unto and instituted by him for that end. In the compassing and effecting of this great work, God dealeth with men under a twofold consideration:—

1. As *rational* creatures. So he discovers to them the end pro-

mised, with its excellency, loveliness, and satisfaction, thereby stirring up in them desires after it, as that eminent and proportioned good which they, in the utmost issue of their thoughts and desires, aim at. Farther; on the forementioned account, that they are rational creatures, endued with a rational appetite or will for the choosing of that which is good, and with an understanding to judge of it, and of the means for the attainment of the end, God reveals to them the means conducing to the end, proposing them to them, to be chosen, and embraced, and closed withal, for the compassing of the end proposed. And that yet they may be dealt withal agreeably to their nature and those principles in them which they are created withal, and that God might have glory by their acting suitably to such a nature and such principles, he exhorts and provokes them to choose those ways and means which he hath so allotted (as before mentioned) for the end aimed at; and that they should be thus dealt withal, their very natural condition, of being free, intellectual agents, doth require.

2. As *sinners*, or agents *disenabled* in themselves for the work prescribed to them and required of them for the attaining of the end they aim at,—namely, in spiritual things; and on that account he puts forth towards them and in them the *efficacy of his power* for the immediate and special working of those things in them and by them which, as rational creatures bound unto an orderly obedience, they are pressed and exhorted unto.

To manifest the inconsistency of such a procedure, and the unanswerableness of it to the infinite wisdom of God (though the Scriptures expressly deliver it in innumerable places, as hath been shown), is that which by Mr Goodwin is in this discourse attempted. His particular endeavour in the place under consideration is, to manifest that when God promiseth to bring about and effect any thing infallibly, by the use of means, it is in vain altogether that any exhortation should be urged on them who are to use the means so appointed for the accomplishment of it. And to the instance above mentioned concerning Paul he replies, chap. xiii. sect. 8:—

"First, it is the generally received opinion of divines, that promises of temporal good things are still conditional, and not absolute; which opinion they maintain upon grounds not easily shaken. Now, evident it is that the promise under question was a promise of this nature and kind, relating only to the preservation of the temporal lives of men."

Ans. That all promises of temporal things, without exception, are conditional,—that is, so as to be suspended on any conditions not promised to be wrought with equal assurance to that which depends on them,—is not the judgment of any divine I know, unless it be of Mr Goodwin, and those of the same persuasion with him in the matter of our present controversy. Who ever but they will say (if

they will) that the promise of bringing the children of Israel out of Egypt was conditional? Let them that do say so assign the condition on which the accomplishment of that promise was suspended. The promise made to the parents of Samson of his birth and mighty actions, what condition was it suspended on? and yet was it a promise of a temporal thing. Though this may be accounted a general rule, because for the most part it is so, yet may not God make a particular exception thereunto? Did he not so in the case of Hezekiah, as to his living fifteen years, as also in those cases before mentioned? It is true, all such promises have appointed means for their accomplishment, but not as conditions whereon their fulfilling is absolutely suspended.

But he adds, "Those words of Paul to the centurion and soldiers lately mentioned ('Except these abide in the ship, ye cannot be safe') undeniably prove the said promise to have been not absolute, but conditional; for in case God should have promised absolutely and without all exception that they should have been safe, Paul had plainly contradicted the truth of it by affirming, not that they should not, but that they could not be safe, otherwise than upon the condition of the mariners abiding in the ship."

Ans. This is boldly ventured. God promiseth that the end shall be accomplished; Paul exhorteth to the use of the means for the attainment of that end, and in that contradicts the truth of God's promise, if it be not conditional. And why so? Who ever said that God promised that they should be safe and preserved in the neglect of means? They were men, and not stones, that God promised so to safeguard; and it was by his blessing upon means that he intended to preserve them: therefore he that stirred them up to the use of means contradicted the promise, unless it were conditional! Paul says, indeed, they could not be safe unless the mariners abode in the ship; not suspending the *certainty* of God's promise upon their continuance in the ship, but manifesting the *means* whereby God would bring about their safety.

That which ensues in the two following exceptions (as Paul's persuading them to take meat, which conduced to their safety, and their casting the wheat into the sea for the same end) amounts no higher than the affirmations already considered, asserting that an infallible promise of an end to be attained by means, and an exhortation to the use of means, with the actual use of them on the account of their necessity as means, are inconsistent; which is plainly, without the least show of proof or truth, to beg the thing in question.

Neither is his case in hand at all promoted by comparing this particular promise, given at such a time and season, with those general promises of earthly blessings made to the obedience of the Jews in the land of Canaan, mentioned Deut. xxviii. 1–14.

As for that which, sixthly, follows in the 9th section, being a marvellous pretty discourse about the promise here made, as though it should be only this, that though the ship were lost and miscarried, yet none of them in it should perish thereby,—merely upon the account of the ship's miscarrying, though on some other account they might be drowned at the same time,—which, upon narrow scanning, he hath at last found out to be the sense of the place, [it] may well deserve the consideration of them who have nothing else to do; for my part, I have other employment.

That which we affirm concerning the words of God by his angel to Paul is, that they were such a promise as could not but infallibly be accomplished, according to the tenor of what is in those words expressed; nor, in respect of the faithfulness of God, could it otherwise be but that it must so fall out and come to pass as was appointed, although the accomplishment of it was to be brought about by the eminent blessing of God upon the means that were to be used by them to whom and concerning whom it was given.

1. For first, the promise was not only concerning the mariners and the rest in the ship, for the preservation of whom the means formerly mentioned were used, but of Paul's appearance before Cæsar,—a great and eminent work whereunto he was designed, Acts ix. 15: "Fear not, Paul; thou must be brought before Cæsar," chap. xxvii. 24. Look, then, what infallibility in respect of the event there was as to Paul's appearance before Cæsar, the same there was in the preservation of the lives of the rest with him. Now, although the staying of the mariners from going out of the ship was a means that Paul was kept alive to be brought before Cæsar, yet can any one be so forsaken of common sense as to say that it was the condition of the purpose of God concerning the fulfilling of that testimony which, according to his appointment, Paul was to make at Rome with all the mighty and successful travail for the propagation of the gospel which he after this was engaged in? was it all now cast upon the fall of an uncertain condition, not at all determined of God as to its accomplishment? Doth the infinitely wise God delight to put the purposes of his heart, and those of so great concernment to the kingdom of his Son and his own glory, in the everlasting welfare of innumerable souls, to such uncertain hazards, which, by various ways obvious and naked before his eyes, he could have prevented?

2. It is part of the prediction of Paul, from the promise he had received (and therewith a revelation thereof), that they should be "cast upon a certain island," God having some work for him there to do. Now, was this part of the promise conditional, or no? If it be said that it was, let the condition on which it depended be assigned. Nothing can be imagined, unless it be that the wind sat in such or such a quarter. It is, then, supposed that God promised

Paul and his company should be cast on an island for their preservation, provided the wind served for that end or purpose! But who, I pray, commands the winds and seas? Doth the wind so "blow where it listeth" as not to be at the command of its Maker? Is it not enough that we cast off his yoke and sovereignty from man, but must the residue of the creation be forced so to pay their homage to our free wills as to be exempted thereby from God's disposal? If this part of the promise were infallible and absolute as to the certainty of its accomplishment, why not the other part of it also?

3. Paul makes confession of his faith to the company concerning the accomplishment of this promise. "I believe God," saith he, ὅτι οὕτως ἔσται καθ' ὃν τρόπον λελάληταί μοι,—"it shall so come to pass in the same manner as it was told me;" clearly engaging the truth and faithfulness of that God which he worshipped (for his testimony to whose truth he was then in bonds) for the accomplishment of what he had spoken to them,—namely, that not one of them should be lost. Now, supposing that any one person had, by any accident, fallen out of the ship, Mr Goodwin tells you there had been no opportunity or possibility left unto God to have fulfilled his promise. True, for it had been wholly frustrated, he having undertaken for the lives of every one of them. But supposing that engagement of his, he that says any one might have so perished is more careful, doubtless, to defend his own hypothesis than the honour of the truth and faithfulness of God.

Evident then it is, notwithstanding the tortures, racks, and wheels, applied by Mr Goodwin to this text, with the confession pretended (and but pretended) to be extorted from it (which but that it hath gotten sanctuary under his name and wing would be counted ridiculous), that here is a promise of God making an event infallible and necessary in respect of its relation thereto, by a clear consistency with exhortations to the use of free and suitable means for the accomplishment of the thing so promised.

Sect. 10. He objects farther to himself, "That in sundry places of Scripture, as 1 Cor. x. 12, 13, Phil. ii. 12, 13, Heb. vi. 4–6, 9, there are promises of perseverance and exhortations unto it joined together; and therefore men who deny a regular and due consistency between them do impute folly and weakness to the Holy Ghost." Whereunto he answers sundry things, to the end of the 11th section; as,—

First, "They are many degrees nearer to the guilt of the crime specified who affirm the conjunction mentioned to be found in the said scriptures, than they who deny the legitimacy of such a conjunction. The incongruity of the conjunction hath been sufficiently evinced, but that any such conjunction is to be found either in the scriptures quoted, or in any others, is no man's vision but his who hath darkness for vision."

Ans. If our adversary's *ipse dixit* may pass current, we shall quickly have small hopes left of carrying on the cause under consideration. All our testimonies must be looked upon as cashiered long since from attending any longer on the trial in hand, and all our arguments as blown away like flies in the summer. The very things here in question,—namely, that there is an inconsistency between promises of perseverance and exhortations to the use of the means whereby it may be effected, that God hath made no such promises, or appointed no such exhortations, and that those who apprehend any such things have darkness for vision,—are all confirmed by the renewed stamp of *teste meipso;* to which proof I shall only say, "Valeat quantum valere potest."

But he adds, "That in none of the places cited is there any promise of perseverance is evident to him that shall duly consider the tenor and import of them.

"For, first, it is one thing to say and teach that God will so limit as well the force as the continuance of temptations, that the saints may be able to bear, another to make a promise of absolute perseverance; yea, these very words, 'That ye may be able to bear it,' clearly import that all that is here promised unto the believing Corinthians is an exhibiting of means to perseverance, if they will improve them accordingly, not an infallible certainty of their perseverance. And that caveat, 'Let him that thinketh he stands take heed lest he fall,' plainly supposeth a possibility of his falling who thinketh, upon the best grounds, that he standeth sure. For that this caveat was not given to hypocrites or unsound believers, or to such who please themselves with a loose and groundless conceit of the goodness of their condition God-ward, is evident, because it were better that such men should fall from their present standing of a groundless conceit than continue their standing, nor would the apostle have ever cautioned such to take heed of falling away whose condition was more like to be made better than worse by their falling. And, besides, to understand the said caveat of loose believers overthrows the pertinency of it to their cause who insist upon it to prove a due consistency between exhortations to perseverance and promises to perseverance, as is evident. If, then, it be directed to true and sound believers, it clearly supposeth a possibility, at least, of their falling in case they shall not take heed, or else their taking heed would be no means, at least no necessary means, of their standing; and farther, it supposeth also a possibility, at least, of their non-taking heed, or that they might possibly not take heed hereof, otherwise the caveat or admonition had been in vain. Men have no need of being admonished to do that which they are under no possibility to omit. If, then, the standing or persevering of the saints depends upon their taking heed lest they fall, and their taking heed in this

kind be such a thing which they may possibly omit, evident it is that there is a possibility of their non-persevering."

Ans. This last division of the 10th section labours to evince that in the first of the places above mentioned, namely, 1 Cor. x. 12, 13, there is not a promise of perseverance in conjunction with exhortations unto the use of means unto that end. The words are, "Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall. There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above what ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it." But,—

1. It is not in the least measure necessary, nor can be upon any account whatever required of us, that we should produce texts of Scripture in an immediate dependence and coherence in the same place, containing both the promises and exhortations mentioned, they being, for the most part, proposed upon most different accounts, and for immediately different ends and purposes;—the one (namely), as in the revelation of them, respecting our *consolation*, the other our *obedience*. Nor can they ever the more be denied to be in a conjunction and consistency, though they are not to be found but in different places of Scripture (which that they are, especially as to that case which is questioned, hath been abundantly declared), than if they were still combined in the same coherence and connection of words. But yet,—

2. I say there is, in the place forenamed, a most *pathetical exhortation to the use of the means* whereby we may persevere, and a most *infallible promise that we shall so persevere*, and not by any temptation whatever be utterly cast down or separated from God in Christ: the first in verse 12, "Wherefore, let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall," and verse 14, "Wherefore, my dearly beloved, flee from idolatry;" the latter in verse 13, "There hath no temptation taken you," etc. First, That there is an exhortation to the use of means for perseverance is not denied by our author, but granted, with an attempt to improve it for the furtherance of his own design. That there is a promise also of perseverance is no less evident. The diversion and turning away of any believer from God must be by temptation. Temptations are of various sorts, both in respect of their immediate rise, nature, and efficiency. Whatever (whence ever it proceed) turns from God, more or less, in part or in whole, as is imagined, is temptation. Now, the apostle here engageth the faithfulness of God in the preservation of believers from the power of temptation, so as it shall not prevail against them to the end before specified. "God," saith he, "is faithful;" and there is no need of his mentioning that property of God, which is his immutable constancy in the performance of his pro-

mises, but only to assure believers that he will preserve them as he hath spoken. The thing promised by the apostle in the name of God is (not only that the saints may be able to bear temptations that shall befall them, ὑπὲρ ὃ δύνασθε; and τοῦ δύνασθαι ὑμᾶς ὑπενεγκεῖν, having quite another importance than what is here intimated in the expression "May be able," in capital letters), that he will not suffer any temptation to come upon them that shall be above that strength, and prevalent against it, which he will communicate to them; and for those which do befall them, he will make way for their escaping, that with and by the strength received they may bear them. So that not only sufficiency of means to persevere, but perseverance itself by those means, and God's ordering all things so in his faithfulness that no assault shall befall them above the power of the strength given them to bear, is here asserted. Now, the promise here given is either absolute or conditional. If absolute,—that is, so far as that it shall infallibly be accomplished, not so depending on any thing that, in respect of the event, may or may not be as to be left at an uncertainty for its fulfilling,—it is all that is of us desired. If it shall be said that it is conditional, I desire that the condition from whence it is said so to be may be assigned. If it shall be said (as it is) that it is "in case they willingly suffer not themselves to be overcome of temptations," I ask whether the strength and ability that God affords to his saints to resist temptations be not in the strengthening and confirming of their wills against them? and if so, whether this promise so interpreted doth not resolve itself into this proposition, "I will not suffer my saints to be overborne by temptations above the strength I will give them to bear, provided they be not pressed with temptations above the strength I give unto them." The promise, then, is absolute, either that no temptations shall befall believers above that they have received, or, that strength not to be overcome shall be afresh communicated to them upon the assaults of any new temptations.

3. This being established, that here is a firm promise of perseverance, against which Mr Goodwin opposeth scarce any thing at all, and nothing at all to the purpose, his whole ensuing discourse falls of itself: for from the caveat used at the entrance of this promise and the exhortation at the close, both tending to stir up the saints, to whom the promise is made (many of whom have no distinct assurance of their interest in this or any other promise), to be heedfully careful in using the means of perseverance and avoiding the sins that in their own nature tend to the interruption of it, no other possibility of falling away can be concluded but such as may have a consistency with the faithfulness of God in the promise he hath given;—that is, a possibility, as they say, "in sensu diviso," without respect had to the infallibly preventing causes of it, not "in sensu composito," not a possi-

bility in reference to the nature of the things themselves; which is a sufficient bottom for caveats to be given and exhortations to be made to them concerned in them, none at all in respect of the purposes and promises of God, infallibly preventing the reducing into act of that possibility. These exceptions then notwithstanding, it appears that in 1 Cor. x. 12, 13, there is a conjunction of a gracious promise of perseverance with effectual exhortations to the use of means whereby we may persevere; and, consequently, they who "deny a due consistency between them do impute folly or weakness to the Holy Ghost." Ὅπερ ἔδει δεῖξαι.

He proceeds to the next place pointed to by himself to prove a consistency between promises and exhortations, under consideration, to wit, Phil. ii. 12, 13, "Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling: for it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." Evident it is that you have here conjoined by the Holy Ghost as weighty and pathetical an exhortation as he almost anywhere useth in the Scripture, with an assertion of grace as eminently operative and effectual as by any means can be expressed.

"But," saith he, "it is one thing to affirm that 'God worketh in men as to will, so to do,'—that is, to enable men to do or put in execution what they first will, or to assist in the doing or executing itself,—another to promise to work infallibly, and without all possibility of frustration, in men perseverance. There is little or no affinity between these. But how and in what sense God is said to be ἐνεργῶν, working in men both to will and to do of his good pleasure, we shall have occasion to open more at large in the latter part of this work."

Ans. I dare say an indifferent reader will conclude that Mr Goodwin was very hard put to it for an answer, finding him contenting himself with such sorry shifts and evident pervertings of the words of the text as those here mentioned. For, first, How come the words to be changed into a working, "as to will, so to do?" that is, perhaps, neither the one nor the other;—who taught him to render καὶ τὸ θέλειν, καὶ τὸ ἐνεργεῖν, "as to will, so to do?" But, secondly, The chief of the sport made with the words consists in the exposition given of them as they lie in this new translation: "To work in them as to will, so to do,—that is, to do what they first will; not that he works in them to will, but that he assists them in doing what they first will." But what is now become of the *tàm quàm* above mentioned? how doth he work in them as to will, so to do, if he only assists them in doing what of themselves, without his assistance, they first will? Rather than it shall be granted that God by his grace works effectually on the wills of men, to the producing of their elicit acts of believing and obedience, any course may be warranted for the

perverting of the expressions where such an operation seems to be held out. Perhaps this persuasion also, of the efficacy of the grace of God on the wills of men, is such that if it be found in any place of Scripture to be declared or asserted, it is enough to make wise and considering, prudent men to question their authority. But, thirdly, saith he, "This is not infallibly to work perseverance." I say, Show what else is required to perseverance but to "will and to do" according to the mind of God, which of his own good pleasure he promiseth effectually to work in believers, and you say something that may render your reasonings considerable. But it seems we must be kept in abeyance for an answer to this, until his criticism be ready to manifest how God is said to be ἐνεργῶν, "working in men," perhaps what is never wrought without any such effect as is imagined. What may by him be brought forth to this purpose time will show. But if he be able to make Ὁ Θεός ἐστιν ὁ ἐνεργῶν ἐν ὑμῖν, "God is working in you to will and to do," forsooth, from the participial expression of the verb, he will manifest more skill in Greek than he hath hitherto in divinity in all his learned treatises. So that here is a second instance of a conjunction of promises of perseverance with exhortations to use the means suited thereunto; which whoso denies to have a just and sweet consistency, doth charge the Holy Ghost with folly or weakness. Ὅπερ ἔδει δεῖξαι.

Thirdly, The verses pointed to out of Heb. vi. 4–6, 9, do not so directly express the conjunction insisted on as those places already considered do; only, the discourse there used by the apostle is peremptory, that men may, without any disparagement to their wisdom or reason, earnestly deal with others and exhort them to avoid falling away from God, though they are fully persuaded that those whom they so exhort, by the help of those exhortations, and upon other considerations, shall abide with God to the end, or be attended with things accompanying salvation. But had Mr Goodwin been pleased to look to the following verses, wherein the apostle gives an account of the ground of this persuasion of his, he might have found something to exercise the best of his skill upon. The words are, "Beloved, we are persuaded better things of you, and things that accompany salvation, though we thus speak. For God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love, which ye have showed toward his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister. And we desire that every one of you do show the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end." He tells them, verse 10, it is upon the account of the righteousness of God in carrying on the work of their labour of love, which was begun in them, and which they had shown or manifested, that he had this persuasion concerning them; which, in the ensuing verses, he farther pursues, clearing up the engagement of the righteousness of God in his oath: of which

elsewhere. So that, notwithstanding any thing attempted to the contrary, evident it is that, in carrying on the work of our salvation, the Holy Ghost doth make use of promises of effectual grace for perseverance and eminent exhortations to abide with God, in such a harmony and consistency as is well suited to the things themselves, and in a course which takes sanctuary under the shade of his wisdom from all the charges of folly and weakness which poor, weak, and foolish men may, under their temptations and in their darkness, rise up against it withal. Whether there are express promises of perseverance in the Scripture, some advantage I hope will be given to the pious reader to judge from what hath been spoken, and what, by the Lord's assistance, may yet be insisted on to that purpose.

Unto this debate about the exhortations of the word we find a discourse of the same nature and importance subjoined about the threatenings that are therein; which, as it is asserted, are rendered useless and ineffectual for the end whereunto they are of God appointed by that doctrine of perseverance which is opposed. We freely acknowledge that if any doctrine whatever do enervate and render vain any ordinance or institution of God, as to the ends and purposes whereunto it is of him appointed, that that doctrine is not of God, whose paths are all plain and equal, and whose commands do not interfere one with another. Now, that the principles of the doctrine of perseverance do destroy the efficiency of threatenings is attempted to be proved by an induction of observations, which, being the sum of all that is spoken to this head, must be transcribed at large, and is as followeth:—

Sect. 12, "If the principles of the doctrine we speak of dissolve the efficiency of the said threatenings towards the end for the accomplishment whereof they are given, then they render them unsavoury, useless, and vain; but the principles of this doctrine are guilty of this offence: *ergo.* The terms of the major proposition are sufficient witness of the truth thereof. In order to the proof of the minor, we suppose, 1. That the end intended by God in such threatenings, which threaten those that shall apostatize with eternal death, is to prevent apostasy in the saints, and to work or cause them to persevere. 2. That this is one of the principles of the common doctrine of perseverance, 'God hath absolutely promised final perseverance unto the saints;' and this another, 'God will certainly, unfrustrably, and infallibly work this perseverance in the saints.' These two things only supposed, the light of the truth of the said minor proposition breaks forth from between them with much evidence and power. For, first, If the said threatenings be intended by God for the prevention of the apostasy of the saints, and consequently to effect their perseverance, the way and manner wherein this end intended by God is to be effected by them must needs be by their

ingenerating or raising a fear or apprehension in the saints of eternal death, it being the native property of fear, mixed with hope, to awaken and provoke men to the use of such means which are proper to prevent the danger or evil feared. There is no other way imaginable how or whereby the threatenings we speak of should operate towards the perseverance of the saints, for the preventing of their apostasy, but that mentioned,—namely, by working in them a fear or dread of the evil threatened. Therefore, secondly, Evident it is that such promises made, and made known unto the saints, by which they are made incapable of any such fear, are absolutely destructive of the efficiency which is proper to the said threatenings to exhibit, towards the prevention of apostasy in the saints, or for the causing of them to persevere. And, lastly, It is every whit as evident that such promises whereby God should assure the saints that they shall not apostatize, but persevere, are apt and proper to render them incapable of all fear of eternal death; and, consequently, are apparently obstructive of, and destructive unto, the native tendency of the said threatenings towards and about the perseverance of the saints. These threatenings can do nothing, contribute nothing, towards the perseverance of the saints, but by the mediation of the fear of evil in them upon their non-persevering; therefore, whatsoever hardens them against this fear, or renders them incapable of it, supersedes all the virtue and vigour which are to be found in these threatenings for or towards the effecting of their perseverance."

Ans. 1. Be it granted that one end of God in his threatenings is to prevent apostasy in the saints, by stirring them up to take careful heed to the ways and means whereby they may persevere, and that they no otherwise work, or cause perseverance, but as they so stir up and provoke men to the things wherein they are to abide; but this is not their only end. They are also discoveries to all the world of the severity of God against sin, and that it is his judgment that they who commit it are worthy of death.

2. If by "Absolute promises of final perseverance" you intend such promises of perseverance, in and by the use of means instituted and appointed by God himself for the accomplishment of the end promised, which are not made or given upon the consideration of any worth in them to whom they are made, nor do depend, as to their accomplishment, on any such condition in them as in the event and issue may not be fulfilled, this observation also is granted. You may add, also, that God will certainly, effectually, and infallibly work in them an abiding with him to the end, or put his law in their hearts, that they shall never depart from him. If by "unfrustrably," also, you intend only that he will so work it as that his counsel and purpose shall not in the end be frustrated or disappointed, we grant that also, for he hath said "his counsel shall stand, and he will do all his pleasure."

These things being thus supposed, let us try the inferences from them that must make good the former assertion concerning the frustration of the use of comminations by them; for they are singled out to bear the weight of this charge.

To the first assumption, then, and inference, I say, there is a two-fold fear of eternal death and destruction:—1. An *anxious, perplexing fear*, in respect of the end itself; 2. A *watchful, careful fear*, in respect of the means leading thereunto. In respect of the first, it is utterly denied that the use and end of the threatenings of God, in respect of his saints, are to ingenerate any such fear in them, it being directly opposed to that faith, assurance, peace, boldness, consolation, and joy, that God is pleased to afford to them, and abundantly exhorts them to live up unto: yea, an anxious, abiding fear of hell is fully contrary to that very conditional assurance of salvation which Mr Goodwin himself, in respect of their present condition, allows to them; nor hath the Lord instituted his ordinances at such a difference and opposition one to another as that, at the same time, towards the same persons, they should be effectual to beget opposite and contrary frames and principles. For the other, or a watchful, heedful fear, for the avoiding of the way and means that *would* lead them, and *do* lead others, to destruction, that is not in the least inconsistent with any assurance that God is pleased by his promises to give to his saints of their perseverance. God will have them expect their perseverance in the way wherein he hath promised it,—that is, by the use of such and such means, helps, and advantages, as he hath appointed for the effectual accomplishment thereof; and therefore nothing is in vain or uselessly applied to them which, according to his appointment, is suited to the stirring of them up to the use of the means ordained for that end, as before mentioned. Therefore, to Mr Goodwin's second assertion, which he calls "evident," I say,—

First, That it is not the making, or the bare making known to the saints, of the promises of God, that will work the end for which they are given to them, or enable them to mix them with faith; and according to the strength of that, and not according to the truth that is in the promises themselves, is their assurance of the things promised. And therefore, notwithstanding all the clear promises of perseverance which are made, and made known to them, we see very many of them not to come up to any such assurance thereof as to be freed from the first sort of fear mentioned, which yet is the proper issue of unbelief, to the begetting whereof in them God hath not instituted any ordinance. Secondly, That none of the saints of God are, by the promises of grace which we assert, freed from that fear which is the proper product and effect of God's comminations in respect of them; and therefore by them there is no obstruction laid in the way of the proper efficiency of those threatenings. What is

added, in the third and last place, is only a repetition of what was before spoken, without any attempt of proof, unless he would have it looked upon as a conclusion from the premises, whose weakness being discovered as to the intent and purpose in hand, we need not farther trouble ourselves with it. Instead of Mr Goodwin's, now considered, take these few observations, which will give so much light into the whole matter under debate as may supersede his whole ensuing discourse:—

First, then, It may be observed (as it was, by the way, in the foregoing discourse), that notwithstanding the promises of perseverance which are given to the saints, yet many there are who are not enabled all their days to mix them with faith, although their interest and portion lie in them no less than theirs who through grace attain the greatest assurance; and on that account they do never all their days get free from some bondage, by reason of the fear of death and destruction. And in respect of such as these, the comminations and threatenings insisted on may have much of that end accomplished which by Mr Goodwin is assigned to them; not that such a frame is directly aimed at in them, Christ dying to deliver them who by reason of death were in bondage all their days, from that bondage which the fear of death for sin doth keep the souls of men in and under, but that it follows, and will follow, upon their darkness and weakness of faith.

Secondly, That the promises of perseverance being of the effecting and accomplishment of it by and in the use of means, do not, nor will, give deliverance to them to whom they are made from fear of death and hell, but only whilst they conscientiously use the means appointed for them to walk in; so that upon their deflection from the rule which is attended with mercy and peace, the threatenings of God to sin and sinners, to apostasy and apostates, do lay hold on them in their full force and efficacy, especially to the ingenerating in them "a terror of the Lord," as the apostle speaks, and an abhorrency of their ways, a loathing of them as not good, that would cause them to "fall into the hands of the living God." So that all Mr Goodwin's arguings, not being levied against *the certainty of perseverance*, but *men's certainty that they shall persevere* (which some never attain unto, some lose either in whole or in part oftentimes), are not to the business in hand.

Thirdly, That eternal death and destruction is not the only subject of God's threatenings, nor all the evil that they may have a fear of whom he deals withal by them. Desertion, rejection, rebukes, sharp and keen arrows, blows of God's hand, temporal death itself, with the like, are also threatened; yea, and so often, in an eminent and dreadful manner, have been inflicted, that though they might be supposed to have always some comfortable assurance of deliverance from

the wrath that is to come, yet the threatenings of God may be suited to beget in them this fear of evil to such a height as may make their "bowels to flow like water, rottenness to enter into their bones, and all their joints to tremble."

Fourthly, That the end of the threatenings of God being to discover to men the connection that is, by his appointment, between the *sins* exagitated and the *punishment* threatened, whence the fear mentioned doth consequently ensue, they may obtain their full and primary effect though that fear be not ingenerated, if they be prevailed on by any other considerations, so that the sin be avoided.

Fifthly, That when the saints do walk orderly, regularly, and closely with God, in the use of means by him appointed, and so doing, from the promises of perseverance, do receive a comfortable assurance that they shall be "kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation," the begetting in them of *fears of death and hell* is neither useful in itself nor are they intended of God to be their portion. But if at any time they "turn aside from the holy commandment," and thereby fail of the persuasion of their perseverance (as their faith will be by such means impaired), though the certainty of the thing itself be no less infallible than formerly, yet by the threatenings of God to them it may be needful to rouse them (by "the terror of the Lord" in them) from the condition whereinto they have cast themselves.

I doubt not but that from the light of these and the like considerations, which might farther be insisted on, it will appear that there may be, and is, an harmonious consistency between the promises and threatenings of the Scripture, notwithstanding the mist that is raised in a long and tedious discourse to interrupt the evidence thereof.

In the 13th section, under pretence of answering an objection, a long discourse is drawn forth farther to varnish over what was before spoken. Nothing of importance, to my best observation, being added, it may be reduced to these four heads:—

First, An assertion, "That the threats against apostasy do not belong to hypocrites,—that is, to them that are not really regenerate, let their profession be what it will; for hypocrites ought not to persevere in the way wherein they are to the end, and therefore there is no danger of their falling away from it;"—which is a ridiculous piece of sophistry; for though they may not be exhorted to continue in their *hypocrisy*, which corrupts and vitiates their profession, yet they may in their *profession*, which in itself is good. And though there is no danger of leaving their hypocrisy, yet there is of their waxing worse and worse, by falling from the beginnings of grace which they have received, the profession which they have made, and the regular conversation which they have entered upon. So that, notwithstanding any thing said to the contrary, the com-

minations under consideration may principally belong to some kind of professors, who, notwithstanding all the gifts and common graces which they have received, yet in a large sense may be termed hypocrites, as they are opposed to them who have received the Spirit with true and saving grace.

Secondly, He says, "It is evident that they belong unto true believers from Heb. vi. 4–6, 9, x. 26, 27, 29;" but if there were no better evidence of the concernment of true believers in the threatenings made to apostasy than what can be drawn from the places mentioned, I dare undertake that Mr Goodwin shall never prove any such concernment of theirs therein whilst his eyes are open. But about this I shall not at present contend.

Thirdly, He tells us "That the end and aim of God in these threatenings is the good of believers:" of which, as far as they are concerned in them, I much less doubt than I do of the clearness of the proof of this assertion from Ps. lxxxv. 8, "I will hear what God the LORD will speak: for he will speak peace unto his people, and to his saints: but let them not turn again to folly;"—a place that I presume was hooked in here violently for want of a fitter opportunity to wrest it with a by-interpretation, because it looks so hardly on the doctrine which our author hath undertaken to defend. But let this pass also.

His fourth assertion, which he pursues at large, or rather with many words, is, "That these threatenings have no tendency to the good of believers, but only by begetting in them a fear of hell and destruction; which that they ought to do is strongly proved from Luke xii. 4, 5, where we are bid to fear Him who can cast both body and soul into hell-fire." Now, though the logic of this argument doth scarce appear to me, nor the strength of the inference from the text,—there being a great difference between fearing Him who can cast both body and soul into hell-fire and fearing of hell-fire, between fearing God for his severity and power, in opposition to the weakness and limitedness of persecutors (even whilst we "fear not their fear, but sanctify the LORD of hosts himself in our hearts, making him our fear and our dread"), and such a fear of punishment as is inconsistent with the promises of God that we shall be preserved in obedience, and so be free from it,—yet I shall consider the following discourse that is built thereon. Supposing all that Mr Goodwin observes from this text, and that the reason of the fear here enjoined is taken from the power of God to cast into hell, yet the whole of the argument thence amounts but thus far: "Because such who are threatened to be persecuted by men, who can only kill their bodies, ought rather to fear God, who can extend his power of punishing to the destruction of body and soul of those that offend him; therefore there is such a fear ingenerated in the saints by the threaten-

ings of the word as is inconsistent with the truth of God's steadfastness in his covenant with them to keep them up to obedience unto the end.

Sect. the 14th, he farther pleads from Heb. xi. 7, 2 Kings xxii. 19, 20, "That the eminentest, holiest men that live may do many things from a principle of fear, or of being afraid of the judgments of God, that they should come upon them; and upon that account have been put upon ways that were acceptable to God."

Ans. We know that the "fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom," and the "fear of the LORD and his goodness" is a great mercy of the covenant of grace. This is not the thing here pleaded for. It is a thing quite of another nature, even that ascribed to the strange nations that were transplanted into Samaria by the king of Assyria, upon the captivity and removal of the ten tribes, and frightened by lions, that destroyed some of them, who did yet continue to worship their own idols, under the dread of God which was upon them, which is called "The fear of the LORD." To complete this fear, it is required that a man have such an apprehension of the coming of hell and wrath upon him as that he be not relieved against it by any interposal of promise, or aught else, from God, that he should be preserved in the way and path whereby he shall assuredly find deliverance from that which he fears. How far this kind of fear, the fear of hell,—not as declarative of the terror of the Lord, but as probable to betide and befall the person so fearing it, and that solely considered as an evil to himself,—may be a principle of any act of acceptable gospel obedience, is not cleared by Mr Goodwin, nor easily will be so; for,—

1. That it is not the intendment of any divine threatenings to beget such a fear, in reference to them that believe, hath been declared.

2. It is no fruit or product of the Spirit of life and love; which, as hath been shown, is the principle of all our obedience and walking with God.

3. It holds out a frame of spirit directly contrary to what we are called and admitted unto under the gospel; for "God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind," 2 Tim. i. 7: and Rom. viii. 15, "Ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father." The spirit of this fear and dread, and the bondage that attends it, is at open variance with the Spirit of liberty, boldness, power, adoption, and a sound mind, wherewith believers are endued. And,—

4. It is that which the Lord Christ intended to remove and take away from his by his death: Heb. ii. 15, He died that he might "deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage."

This fear, then, I say, which is neither promise of the covenant, nor fruit of the Spirit, nor product of saving faith, will scarce, upon strict inquiry, be found to be any great furtherer of the saints' obedience. What use the Lord is pleased to make of this dread and terror in the hearts of any of his, for the hedging up their ways from folly, and staving them off from any actual evil, when, through the strength of temptation, they do begin to cast off the law of life and love whereby they are governed, is not in the least prejudiced by any thing asserted in the doctrine of the saints' perseverance. Towards some, who, though they are persuaded of the perseverance of the saints indefinitely, yet have no persuasion, or at least no prevailing cheering assurance, that themselves are saints (which Mr Goodwin thinks to be the condition of far the greatest part of believers), it hath its full power and extent, its whole efficacy depending on the apprehensions of the mind wherein it is. Towards the residue, who upon abiding grounds and sure foundations have obtained a comfortable spiritual persuasion of their own interest in the promises of God, that the consideration of hell and judgment, as the due debt of sin and necessary vindication of the glory of God, hath also its effect and influence, as far as God is pleased to exercise them therewith, acquainting them continually with his terror, and filling them with an abhorrency of those ways which in and of themselves tend to so dismal an end and issue, hath been declared.

The places of Scripture mentioned by Mr Goodwin doubtless will not reach his intendment. Of Noah it is said that he was εὐλαβηθείς after he was χρηματισθείς. Being warned of God of that flood that was for to come upon the world of ungodly men, and the salvation of himself and his family by the ark, being filled with the reverence of God, and assured of his own preservation, he industriously sets himself about the use of the means whereby it was to be accomplished. That because a man assured of an end from God himself, in and by the use of means, did, with reverential fear of God, not of any evil threatened, which he was to be preserved from, set himself to a conscientious use of means whereby the promised end of God's own institution is to be brought about, therefore the fear of hell (such a fear as hath been described) is one principle of the obedience of the saints in their walking with God, and such as they ought to cherish, as being a means appointed of God for that end and purpose, is an argument of no great value here with us. Neither, surely, will the conclusion intended be more evidently educed from the tenderness of the heart of Josiah under the preaching of the law, mentioned in the second place; and therefore I shall not need to call it into examination.

But it is added farther, sect. 14, p. 314, "The present state and frame of the hearts and souls of the saints, duly considered, which

are made up as well of flesh and corruption as of Spirit and grace, the former having need of bridles for restraint, as well as the latter of spurs for quickening, evident it is that arguments or motives drawn from fear of punishment are as necessary and proper for them in respect of the one as incitements from love in respect of the other. 'A whip for the horse,' says Solomon, 'a bridle for the ass, and a rod for the fool's back.' The flesh, even in the wisest of men, is a fool, and would be unruly without a rod ever and anon shaken over it; nor should God have made such gracious, bountiful, and effectual provision for the perseverance of the saints as now he hath done, had he not engaged as well the passion of fear within them as of love to be their guardian keeper. It is true, 'perfect love casteth out fear,' but who amongst the saints themselves can say either that his heart is clean or his love perfect? Perfect love casteth out flesh as well as fear; yea, true love, until flesh be cast out, preserveth fear for its assistant and fellow-helper. The flesh would soon make love a wanton, and entice her unto folly, did not fear dissolve the enchantment and protect her chastity."

Of this last division of the 14th section there are two parts;—the first confirmative of what was spoken before concerning the usefulness of the fear of hell and punishment for the furthering of the saints' obedience; the other responsatory to what is urged to the contrary from 1 John iv. 18, "Perfect love casteth out fear." For the first, it is granted that there are those two contrary principles of flesh and spirit, corruption and grace, in the hearts of all, even the best and most eminent saints, whilst they continue here below. But that these two should be principles acting themselves in their obedience,—the one moved, incited, and stirred up by love, the other from the fear whereof we are speaking, is a fleshly, dark, anti-evangelical conceit. That the principle in believers which the Scripture calls "flesh" and "corruption" needs incitement to obedience, or is to be incited thereunto, as is affirmed, is no less corrupt than what was before mentioned. Look, whatsoever influence flesh or corruption hath into any of our obedience, so far that obedience is vitiated, corrupted, rendered unclean, and unacceptable before God. The flesh is to be crucified, slain, destroyed, not stirred up and provoked to obedience, being indeed disobedience in the abstract,—enmity to God. You may as well persuade darkness to shine as the flesh to obey. It is not "a fool" (as that allusion bespeaks it from Prov. xxvi. 3), "that would be unruly were not a rod ever and anon shaken over him," but it is folly itself, that is not to be cured, but killed,—not stirred up, but mortified. How that is to be done hath been formerly at large declared. It is by the Spirit's bringing the cross and power of the death of Christ into the heart of the sinner, and not by any consideration of hell and punishment that we can take upon our-

selves,—who never did, nor ever will, mortify any sin to the end of the world,—that this work is to be wrought.

Secondly, That which is added of "God's bountiful provision for the perseverance of the saints, by engaging the passion of *fear* as well as *love*," is of no better a frame or constitution than that which went before. That our gracious Father hath made fuller, larger, and more certain, provision for our perseverance than any that can be afforded by the engaging of our passions by consideration of punishment or reward, I hope hath been sufficiently demonstrated. And if Mr Goodwin intend no more by his love and fear of God than the engaging of those natural passions in us by the considerations intimated, I shall not be rival with him in his persuasion. The love we intend is a fruit of the *Spirit of God* in us, and the fear contended about is of the *spirit of bondage;* which, though it be not pressed on us as our duty, yet we hope that [such] bountiful provision is made for our perseverance as shall effectually support and preserve us to the end. Blessed be his name, his saints have many better guardians and keepers than a bondage frame of spirit upon the account of the wrath to come, from whence they are delivered by Christ! They are in his own hand, and in the hand of his Son, and are kept through faith by his power to salvation. If this be the end of Mr Goodwin's preaching the threatenings of God at any time, namely, that, the natural passion of fear being stirred up with the apprehensions of hell, the flesh that is in man may be incited to obedience, I hope he hath not many consenting with him in the same intendment.

Thirdly, To an objection framed from 1 John iv. 18, that "perfect love casteth out fear," he tells us, first, "That it may be so, but whose love is perfect?" secondly, "That love cherisheth fear, until the flesh be quite cast out;" thirdly, "That the flesh would make love wanton and entice it to folly, did not fear dissolve the enchantment." But,—

1. Though love be not *perfect* to all degrees of perfection here, yet it may have, yea it hath, in the saints, the perfection of uprightness and sincerity; which is all that is here intended, and all that is required to it for the casting out of that tormenting fear of which the apostle speaks. "Fear," saith he, "hath torment;" and if our love cannot amount to such perfection as to cast it out, it being only to be cast out thereby, it is impossible we should ever be freed from torment all our days, or be filled with joy and consolation in believing; which would frustrate the glorious design of God, which he hath sworn himself willing to pursue, Heb. vi. 17, 18, and the great end of the death of Christ, which he hath perfectly accomplished, chap. ii. 14, 15.

2. It is true, there is a fear that love cherisheth,—the fear that God hath promised in the covenant of grace to preserve in our hearts all our days; but to say it cherisheth the fear we speak of, and

which the Holy Ghost in this place intendeth, is expressly to make the Holy Ghost a liar, and to contradict him to his face.

3. What love in us is that that the flesh can or may "entice to folly?" Are the fruits of the Spirit of God, the graces of his own working and creating in us, of such a temper and constitution as that they may be enticed to uncleanness and folly? And is it possible that such a thought should enter into the heart of a man professing the doctrine of the gospel? that ink should stain paper with such filth cast upon the Spirit and grace of God? The fear of hell erewhile was suited to the use of the flesh, but now, it seems, it serves to keep the love of God itself in order, that otherwise would wax wanton, fleshly, and foolish! Foolish love, that will attempt to cast out this tormenting fear, not being able to preserve itself from folly without its assistance!

Sect. 15 is spent in an answer endeavoured to an objection placed in the beginning of it, in these words:—

"If it be farther demanded, 'But doth it not argue servility in men to be drawn by the iron cord of the fear of hell to do what is their duty to do? or doth any other service or obedience become sons and children but only that which is free and proceedeth from love?'"

Hereunto you have a threefold answer returned:—

First, "That God requires that it should be so;" which is a downright begging of the question.

Secondly, He puts a difference between the obedience of children to their parents and of the saints unto God, the discourse whereof discovering some mysteries of the new doctrine of grace, much pressed and insisted on, take as follows:—"There is a very different consideration of the obedience of children to their natural parents, and of the obedience of the children of God unto their heavenly Father. The obedience of the former is but by the inspiration of nature, and is an act not so much raised by deliberation or flowing from the will, by an interposure of judgment and conscience to produce the election, as arising from an innate propension in men, accompanying the very constituting principles of their nature and being; whereas the latter, the obedience of the children of God, is taught by precepts, and the principle of it, I mean that rational frame of heart out of which they subject themselves to God, is planted in the souls of men by the engagement of reason, judgment, and conscience, to consider those grounds, arguments, and motives, by which their heavenly Father judgeth it meet to work and fashion them unto such a frame. So that though the obedience of natural children to their natural parents be the more genuine and commendable when it flows freely from the pure instinct of nature, and is not drawn from them by fear of punishment, yet the obedience of the children of God is then most genuine and commendable, and like unto itself, when it is produced

and raised in the soul by a joint influence and contribution, not of one, or of some, but of all those arguments, reasons, motives, inducements whatever, and how many soever they be, by which their heavenly Father useth to plant and work it in them; for in this case, and in this only, it hath most of God, of the Spirit of God, of the wisdom of God, of the goodness of God. In and upon this account it is likeliest to be most free, uniform, and permanent."

The sum of this answer amounts to these three things:—First, That there is an *instinct* or inspiration of nature in children to yield obedience to their parents. Secondly, That there is no such *spiritual instinct* or inclination in the saints to yield obedience to God. Thirdly, That the obedience of the saints ariseth merely and solely from *such considerations of the reason of that obedience* as they apprehend, in contradiction to any such genuine principles as might incline their hearts thereunto.

1. For the first, that the obedience of children to their parents, though it be a prime dictate of the law of nature wherewith they are endued, proceedeth from a *pure instinct*, any otherwise than as a principle suiting and inclining them to the acts of that obedience, so as to exclude the promoting and carrying of it on upon the moral consideration of duty, piety, etc., it is in vain for Mr Goodwin to go about to persuade us, unless he could not only corrode the word of God, where it presseth that obedience as a duty, but also charm us into beasts of the field, which are acted by such a brute instinct, not to be improved, stirred up, or drawn forth into exercise by deliberation or consideration. There is, it is true, in children an impress of the power of the law of nature, suiting them to obedience (which yet in many hath been quite cast out and obliterated, being none of the constituting principles of their nature, which, whilst they have their being as such, cannot be thrown out of them), and carrying them out unto it with delight, ease, and complacency, as habits do to suitable actings; but withal that this principle is not regulated and directed, as our obedience to God, by a rule, and stirred up to exert itself, and [that] they in whom it is [are not] provoked by rational and conscientious considerations to the performance of their duty in that obedience, is so contrary to the experience, I suppose, of all sharers with us in our mortality, that it will hardly be admitted into debate. But,—

2. The worst part of this story lies in the middle of it, in the exclusion of any such *spiritual principle* in believers as should carry them out unto obedience, at least to any such as is not begotten in their minds by "rational considerations." Whatever may be granted of acquired habits of grace (which that the first should be, that a spiritual habit should be acquired by natural actings, is a most ridiculous fiction), all infused habits of grace that should imprint upon

the soul a new natural inclination to obedience, that should fashion and frame the hearts of men into a state and condition suited for, and carry them out unto, spiritual obedience, are here decried. All, it seems, that the Scripture hath told us of our utter insufficiency, deadness, disability, indisposedness to any thing that is good, without a new life and principle; all that we have apprehended and believed concerning the new heart and Spirit given us, the new nature, new creature, divine nature, inner man, grace in the heart, making the root good, that the fruit may be so; all that the saints have expressed concerning their delight in God, love to God upon the account of his writing his laws in their hearts and spirits,—is a mere delusion. There is no principle of any heavenly, spiritual life, no new nature, with its bent and instinct lying towards God and obedience to him, wrought in the saints, or bestowed on them, by the Holy Spirit of grace. If this be so, we may even fairly shut our Bibles, and go learn this new gospel of such as are able to instruct us therein. Wherefore, I say,—

3. That as in children there is an instinct, an inclination of nature, to induce them and carry them out to obedience to their natural parents, which yet is directed, regulated, provoked, and stirred up, and they thereby, to that obedience, by motives and considerations suited to work upon their minds and consciences, to prevail with them thereunto: so also in believers, the children of God, who are "begotten of the will of God," by the "word of truth," and "born again, not of the will of the flesh, but of the will of God," there is a new spiritual principle, a constituting principle of their spiritual lives, wrought and implanted in them by the Spirit of God,—a principle of faith and love, enabling them for, suiting them unto, and inciting them to, that obedience which is acceptable and well-pleasing to their Father which is in heaven; in which obedience, as they are regulated by the word, so they are stirred up unto it by all those motives which the Lord in his infinite wisdom hath fitted to prevail on persons endued with such a principle from himself as they are. It is not incumbent on me to enter upon the proof and demonstration of a title to a truth which the saints of God have held so long in unquestionable possession, nothing at all being brought to invalidate it but only a bare insinuation that it is not so. Then,—

4. I deny not but that the saints of God are stirred up to obedience by all the considerations and inducements which God lays before them and proposeth to them for that end and purpose; and as he hath spread a principle of obedience over their whole souls, all their faculties and affections, so he hath provided in his word motives and inducements to the obedience he requires, which are suited unto and fit to work upon all that is within them (as the psalmist speaks) to live to him. Their love, fear, hope, desires, are

all managed within and provoked without to that end and purpose. But how it will thence follow that it is the intendment of God by his threatenings to ingenerate such a fear of hell in them as is inconsistent with an assurance of his faithfulness in his promises not to leave them, but to preserve them to his heavenly kingdom, I profess I know not. The obedience of the saints we look upon to proceed from a principle wrought in them with a higher energy and efficacy than mere desires of God to implant it by arguments and motives; that is, by persuading them to it, without the least real contribution of strength or power, or the ingrafting the word in them, in, with, and by, a new principle of life. And if this be the Phyllis of our author's doctrine, *solus habeto.* Such a working of obedience we cannot think to have any thing "of God, of the Spirit of God, of the wisdom of God, or the goodness of God," in it; being exceedingly remote from the way and manner of God's working in the saints as held out in the word of truth, and ineffectual to the end proposed in that condition wherein they are. The true use of the threatenings of wrath, in reference to them who by Christ are delivered from it, hath been before manifested and insisted on.

Thirdly, In the last division of this section, he labours to prove that what is done from a principle of fear may be done willingly and cheerfully, as well as that which is done from a principle of love. To which briefly I say,—

1. Neither fear nor love, as they are mere natural affections, is any principle of spiritual obedience as such.

2. That we are so far from denying the usefulness of the fear of the Lord to the obedience of the saints, that the continuance thereof in them to the end is the great promise, for the certain accomplishment whereof we do contend.

3. That fear of hell in believers, as a part of the wrath of God from which they are delivered by Christ, being opposed to all their graces of faith, love, hope, etc., is no principle of obedience in them, whatever influence it may have on them as to restraint when managed by the hand of God's grace.

4. That yet believers can never be delivered from it but by faith in the blood of Christ, attended with sincere and upright walking with God; which when they fail of, though that fear, supposed to be predominant in the soul, be inconsistent with any comfortable, cheering assurance of the favour of God, yet it is not with the certain continuance to them of the thing itself, upon the account of the promises of God.

Sect. 16. contains a large discourse, in answer to the apostle affirming that "fear hath torment;" which is denied by our author, upon sundry considerations. The fear he intends is a fear of hell and "wrath to come." This he supposeth to be of such predomi-

nancy in the soul as to be a principle of obedience unto God. That this can be without torment, disquiet, bondage, and vexation, he will not easily evince to the consciences of them who have at any time been exercised under such a frame. What fear is consistent with hope; what incursions upon the souls of the saints are made by dread and bondage; the fears of hell, and the use of such fears; how some are, though true believers, scarcely delivered from such fears all their days,—I have formerly declared. And that may suffice as to all our concernment in this discourse.

In the 17th section somewhat is attempted as to promises, answerable to what hath been done concerning exhortations and threatenings. The words used to this end are many; the sum is, "That the use of promises in stirring men up to obedience is solely in the proposal of a good thing or good things to them to whom the promises are made, which they may attain or come short of. Now, if men are assured, as this doctrine supposeth they may be, that they shall attain the end whether they use the means or no, how can they possibly be incited by the promises to the use of the means proposed for the enjoyment of the end promised?" That this is the substance of his discourse I presume himself will confess; and it being the winding up of a tedious argument, I shall briefly manifest its uselessness and lay it aside. I say, then,—

1. What is the true use of the promises of God, and what influence they have into the obedience and holiness of the saints, hath been formerly declared; neither is any thing there asserted of their genuine and natural tendency to the ends expressed enervated in the least by any thing here insisted on or intimated by Mr Goodwin: so that without more trouble I might refer the reader thither to evince the falseness of Mr Goodwin's assertions concerning the uselessness of the promises unto perseverance, upon a supposition that there are promises of perseverance.

2. Though we affirm that all true saints shall persevere, yet we do not say that all that are so do know themselves to be so, and towards them, at least, the promises may have their efficacy in that way which Mr Goodwin hath by his authority confined them to work in.

3. We say that our Saviour was fully persuaded that in the issue of his undertakings and sufferings he should be "glorified with his Father," according to his promise; and yet, upon the account of that glory, which he was so assured of, being set before him, he addressed himself to the sharpest and most difficult passage to it that ever any one entered on. He "endured the cross, despising the shame," for the glory's sake whereof he had assurance, Heb. xii. 2. And why may not this be the state of them to whom, in his so doing, he was a captain of salvation? Why may not the glory and reward set before them, though enjoyed in a full assurance of faith, in the excel-

lency of it, when possessed, as promised, stir them up to the means leading thereunto?

4. The truth is, the more we are assured with the assurance of faith (not of presumption) that we shall certainly obtain and enjoy the end whereunto the means we use do lead (as is the assurance that ariseth from the promises of God), the more eminently are we pressed in a gospel way, if we walk in the spirit of the gospel, to give up ourselves to obedience to that God and Father who hath appointed so precious and lovely means as are the paths of grace for the obtaining of so glorious an end as that whereunto we are appointed.

And thus I doubt not but that it is manifest, by these considerations of Mr Goodwin's objections to the contrary, that the doctrine of the perseverance of the saints, as by us taught and delivered, doth not only fall in a sweet compliance with all the means of grace, especially those appointed by God to establish the saints in faith and obedience,—that is, to work perseverance in them,—but also to be eminently useful to give life, vigour, power, and efficacy, in a peculiar gospel manner, to all exhortations, threatenings, and promises, appointed and applied by God to that end and purpose.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE ASSERTORS AND ADVERSARIES OF THE DOCTRINE COMPARED.

The maintainers and propagators of the several doctrines under contest taken into consideration—The necessity of so doing from Mr G. undertaking to make the comparison—This inquiry confined to those of our own nation—The chief assertors of the doctrine of the saints' perseverance in this nation since it received any opposition; what was their ministry, and what their lives—Mr G.'s plea in this case—The first objection against his doctrine by him proposed, second and third—His answers to these objections considered, removed—His own word and testimony offered against the experience of thousands—The persons pointed to by him and commended, considered—The principles of those persons he opposeth vindicated—Of the doctrine of the primitive Christians as to this head of religion—Grounds of mistake in reference to their judgment—The first reformers constant to themselves in their doctrine of the saints' perseverance—Of the influence of Mr Perkins' judgment on the propagation of the doctrine of the saints' perseverance—Who the persons were on whom his judgment is supposed to have had such an influence—The consent of foreign churches making void this surmise—What influence the doctrine of the saints' perseverance has into the holiness of its professors—Of the unworthiness of the persons who in this nation have asserted the doctrine of apostasy—The suitableness of this doctrine to their practices—Mr G.'s attempt to take off this charge—How far men's doctrines may be judged by their lives—Mr G.'s reasons why Episcopalists arminianized the first, considered and disproved—His discord, etc.—General apostasy of men entertaining the Arminian tenets—The close.

As to the matter in hand, about the usefulness of the doctrine of

the perseverance of the saints in and unto the ministry of the gospel, and the obstruction pretended to be laid unto it thereby, it may be somewhat conducing and of concernment to consider who the persons are and were, and what hath been and is the presence of God with them, in their ministry, who have been assertors and zealous maintainers of this doctrine; and withal *who* they were, and *what* they have been in their ministry, and in the dispensation of the word committed unto them, who have risen up in opposition thereunto. How, also, these different parties have approved their profession to the world, and acquitted themselves in their generation in their walking with God, may be worth our consideration. Doubtless, if the doctrine whose declaration and defence we have thus far engaged in be of such a pernicious tendency as is pretended, so destructive to gospel obedience, and so evidently rendering that great ordinance of the ministry useless, it may be traced to its product of these effects, in some measure, in the lives, conversations, and ministry, of those who have most zealously espoused it, most earnestly contended for it, and been most given up to the form and mould thereof. It were a thing every way miraculous, if any root should for the most part bring forth fruit disagreeing to the nature of it.

A task this is, I confess, which, were we not necessitated unto, I could easily dispense with myself from engaging in; but Mr Goodwin having voluntarily entered the list as to this particular, and instituted a comparison between the abettors of the several doctrines under contest, chap. ix. of his book (a matter we should not have expected from any other man), it could not but be thought a gross neglect of duty, and high ingratitude towards those great and blessed souls who in former and latter days, with indefatigable pains and eminent success, watered the vineyard of the Lord with the dew of this doctrine, to decline the consideration of the comparison made and dressed up to our hand. Now, because it is a peculiar task allotted to us, to manifest the embracement of this truth by those who in the primitive church were of greatest note and eminency, for piety, judgment, and skill in dividing the word aright; with the professed opposition made unto it by such as those with whom they lived, and succeeding ages, have branded for men unsound in the faith, and leaving the good old paths wherein the saints of old found peace to their souls; as also to manifest the receiving and propagation of it by all (not any one of name excepted) those great and famous persons whom the Lord was pleased to employ in the reformation of his church, walking in this, as in sundry other particulars, closer up to the truth of the gospel than some of their brethren, that at the same time fell off from that church which was long before fallen off from the truth;—I shall, in my present inquiry, confine myself to those of our own nation who have been of renown in their

generation for their labour in the Lord, and of name among the saints for their work in the service of the gospel.

For the one half of that small space of time which is passed since the breaking forth of the light of the gospel in this nation, we are disenabled from pursuing the comparison instituted, the one part being not to be considered, or at least not being considerable. The time when first head was made against the truth we profess, and criminations like those managed by Mr Goodwin hatched and contrived to assault it withal, was when it had been eminently delivered to the saints of this nation, and to all the churches of Christ, by Reynolds, Whitaker, Greenham, and others like to them, their fellow-labourers in the Lord's vineyard. The poor weak worms of this present generation who embrace the same doctrine with these men of name, are thought to be free (some of them, at least) from being destroyed by the poisonous and pernicious embracing of it, by their own weakness and disability to discern the natural, genuine consequences and tendency in the progress of that which in the root and foundation they embrace. Their ignorance of their own doctrine in its compass and extent is the mother of that devotion which in them is nourished thereby. So our great masters tell us, against whose kingly authority in these things there is no rising up. For the persons formerly named the like relief cannot be supposed. He that shall provide an apology for them, affirming that they understood not the state, nature, consequences, and tendencies, of the doctrine they received, defended, preached, contended for, will scarce be able, by any following defensative, to vindicate his own credit for so doing. In the lives, then, and the ministry of those men, and such as those, if anywhere, are the fruits of this doctrine to be seen. If it corrupted not their *lives*, nor weakened their *ministry;* if it turned not them aside from the paths of gospel obedience, nor weakened their hands in the dispensation of the word, in the promises, threatenings, and exhortations thereof, to the conversion of souls and building up of those who by their ministry were called, in their most holy faith,—it cannot but be a strong presumption that there is no such venomous, infectious quality in this doctrine as of late some chemical divines pretend themselves to be able to extract out of it. Now, what, I pray, were these men?—what were their lives? what was their ministry? All those who now oppose Mr Goodwin's doctrine do it either out of ignorance, or to comply with greatness and men in authority; thereby to make up themselves in their ambitious and worldly aims, and to prevail themselves upon the opinion of men;—for what cause else in the world can be imagined why they should so engage? What though they really believe the whole fabric of his doctrine,—wherein he hath departed from the faith he once, as they say, professed,—to be a lie; a lie of dangerous

and pernicious consequence to the souls of men; a lie derogatory to the glory of God, the efficacy of grace, the merit of the death of Christ, and the honour of the gospel, and full of disconsolation to poor souls, being in and under temptation? what though they suppose it secretly to undermine the main fundamentals of the covenant of grace, and covertly to substitute another covenant in the room thereof? what though they have observed that the doctrine they have received was embraced, preached, prized, by all those great and blessed souls which, in the last generation, God magnified with the conversion of so many thousands in this nation, given unto their ministry, whilst they spent their days under continual afflictions and persecutions? what though they have the general, known consent of all the reformed churches beyond the seas with them in their zeal for the doctrine under consideration? what though, under these and the like apprehensions, they profess in the presence of God, his holy angels, and men, that the eternal interest of the precious souls of men is more valuable to them ten thousand times than their own lives, and that that is the sole reason of their opposition to Mr Goodwin in his attempts against the doctrine they have so received and embraced? —yet it is meet for us to judge, and for all by whom evil surmises are not esteemed to be among the works of the flesh, that all their opposition is nothing but a compliance with, and pursuit of, those worldly, low, and wretched aims, that they are filled withal! But as to those persons before mentioned, what shall we say? Their piety, literature, zeal, diligence, industry, labour, with success in the work of the ministry (and that under manifold discouragements), are so renowned in the world, that how or wherewith they shall be shifted off from being considerable in their testimony, I cannot imagine. If ever persons in these latter ages had written upon their breasts, "Holiness to the LORD,"—if ever any bare about a conformity to the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, —they may put in for an eminent esteem and name among them, and will doubtless be found at last to be of the "thirty," if they attain not to the first rank of the worthies of Christ in these ends of the world. How is it that they were not retarded in the course of their gospel obedience by their entertainment of this wretched doctrine of the saints' perseverance? But what though they kept themselves personally from the pollution of it, yet possibly their ministry was defiled and rendered useless by it! And who, I pray, is it that in this generation can so support himself with success in the ministry as to rise up with this accusation against them? Many thousands who were their crown, their glory, and rejoicing in Christ, are fallen asleep; and some continue to this day. Of the reasons given by Mr Goodwin why all the zealous, fruitful preachers of former days embraced this doctrine, we shall instantly undertake the consideration.

In the meantime, this seems strange, that God should magnify and make famous the ministry of so many throughout the world, and give in that visible blessing to their labours therein which hath filled this island with such an increase of children to Zion as that she hath not lengthened the cords of her tabernacle to such an extent and compass in any proportionable spot of earth under heaven, if any one eminent part of their doctrine, and that whereon they laid great weight in their ministry, which they pressed with as much fervency and contention of spirit as any head of the like importance, should indeed be so apparently destructive of holiness, and of such a direct and irresistible efficiency to render useless that great ordinance of the ministry committed to them, as this is clamoured to be. What will be the success of them in their ministry who shall undertake to deny and oppose it, I hope the people of God in this nation will not have many instances to judge by. The best conjecture we can for the present make of what will be hereafter must be taken from what hath already come to pass; and the best guess of what events will be is to be raised from the consideration of what hath been, from a like disposition of causes to an answerableness of events.

What Mr Goodwin hath to plead in this case, he insists on, chap. ix., sect. 24–27, pp. 167–172. The sum and aim of his discourse is, to apologize for his doctrine against sundry objections which, in the observation of men, it is liable and obnoxious unto. Now, these are such as, whatever the issue of their consideration prove, doubtless it can be of no advantage unto his cause that his doctrine is so readily exposed to them.

The first of these is, that the doctrine he opposeth, and in opposition whereunto that is set up which he so industriously asserts, hath generally been received and embraced by men eminent in piety and godliness, famous on that account in their generations, with the generality of the people of God with them. And this is attended with that which naturally ensues thereon,—namely, the scandalousness of the most of them (yea, of them all of this nation is it spoken) who have formerly asserted the doctrine which Mr Goodwin hath lately espoused. Whereunto, in the third place, an observation is subjoined of the "ordinary defection of men to loose and unsavoury practices, after they have once drunk in the principles of that opinion which he now so industriously mixeth and tempereth for them." It is usually said, "There is no smoke but where there is some fire." It would be strange if such observations as these should be readily and generally made by men concerning the doctrine under contest, unless there were some evident occasion administered by it thereunto; and I must needs say, that if they prove true, and hold under examination, they will become as urging a prejudice as can lightly be laid against any cause in religion whatsoever. The gospel being a

"doctrine according to godliness," several persuasions pretending to be parts and portions thereof, if one shall be found to be the constant faith and profession of those who also have the life and power of godliness in them, the other to be maintained by "evil men and seducers," who upon their receiving it do also "wax worse and worse," it is no small advantage to the first, in its plea for admittance to the right and title of a truth of the gospel.

First, To evade this charge, Mr Goodwin premises this in general:—

"The experience asserted in the objection is not so unquestionable in point of truth but that, if the assertors were put home upon the proof, they would, I fear" (doubtless he rather *hopes* it), "account more in presumption than in reasonableness of argument; for if persons of the one judgment and of the other were duly compared together, I verily believe there would be found every whit as full a proportion of men truly conscientious and religious amongst those whose judgments stand, and have stood, for a possibility of falling away, as on the other side: but, through a foolish and unsavoury kind of partiality, we are apt, on all hands, according to the proverb, to 'account our own geese for swans, and other men's swans geese.' Certain I am, that if the writings of men of the one judgment and of the other be compared together, and an estimate made from thence of the religion, worth, and holiness, of the authors respectively, those who oppose the common doctrine of perseverance do account it no robbery to make themselves every way equal in this honour with their opposers. The truth is (if it be lawful for me to utter what I really apprehend and judge in the case), I do not find that spirit of holiness to breathe, with that authority, heat, or excellency of power, in the writings of the latter, which I am very sensible of in the writings of the former. These call for righteousness, holiness, and all manner of Christian conversation, with every whit as high a hand as the other, and add nothing, to check, obstruct, or enfeeble, the authority of their demands in this kind; whereas the other, though they be sore many times in their exhortations and conjurements unto holiness, yet other while render both these and themselves in them contemptible, by avouching such principles which cut the very sinews and strength of such their exhortations, and fully balance all the weight of those motives by which they seek to bind them upon the consciences of men. And as for men truly holy and conscientious, doubtless the primitive Christians, for three hundred years together and upwards, next after the times of the apostles, will fully balance, with an abundant surplusage, both for numbers and truth of godliness, all those in the reformed churches who since Calvin's days have adhered to the common doctrine of perseverance. And that the churches of Christ very generally, during the said

space of three hundred years and more, held a possibility of a total and final defection, even in true and sound believers, is so clear from the records yet extant of those times that it cannot be denied."

Ans. To let pass Mr Goodwin's proverb with its application (it being very facile to return it to its author, there being nothing in the world by him proposed to induce us to such an estimation of his associates in the work of teaching the doctrine of the saints' apostasy and their labours therein, or any other undertaking of theirs, as he labours to beget in gilding over their worth and writings, but only his own judgment, and an overweening of their geese for swans), let us see what is offered by him to evince the experience asserted not to be so unquestionable as is pretended. He offers, 1. His own affirmation, "That if an estimate may be made of men's worth and holiness by their writings, those who oppose the doctrine of the saints' perseverance will be found, in the promotion of holiness and practice of it, to outgo their adversaries." "Their writings," he tells us, "breathe forth a spirit of holiness such as he cannot find in the writings of others." But, *first*, for this you have only Mr Goodwin's naked, single testimony, and that opposed to the common experience of the people of God. What weight this is like to bear with men the event will show. It is a hard thing for *one man*, upon his *bare word*, to undertake to persuade a multitude that what their eyes see and their ears hear is not so. Mr Goodwin had need have Pythagorean disciples for the embracing of these dictates of his. The experience of thousands is placed to confirm the observation insisted on. Saith Mr Goodwin, "It is not so; they are, in my judgment, all deceived." But, *secondly*, who are they in whose writings Mr Goodwin hath found such a "spirit of holiness breathing, with authority, as is not to be found out nor perceived in the writings of them that assert the doctrine of the perseverance of the saints?" Calvin, Zanchius, Beza, etc., and (to confine ourselves to home) Reynolds, Whitaker, Perkins, Greenham, Dodd, Preston, Bolton, Sibbs, Rogers, Culverwell, Cotton, etc.,—whose fame upon this very account, of the eminent and effectual breathing of a spirit of holiness in their writings, is gone out into all the nations about us, and their remembrance is blessed at home and abroad,—are some of the men who have, as hath been showed, laboured in watering the vineyard of the Lord with the dew and rain of this doctrine. Who or where are they who have excelled them in this undertaking? Let the men be named, and the writings produced, that Mr Goodwin may have some joined with him in a search after and judgment of that spirit that breathes so excellently in them, that we be not forced to take his testimony of we know not what nor whom. Those amongst ourselves of chiefest name who have appeared in the cause that Mr Goodwin hath now undertaken are, Tompson, Montague, etc., with an obscure rabble

of that generation. I shall easily allow Mr Goodwin to be a man more sharp-sighted than the most of those with whom he hath to do in this present contest, as also to have his senses more exercised in the writings of those eminent persons last named; but yet that he is sensible of such a spirit of holiness breathing in their writings (which, for the most part, are stuffed with cruel scoffings at the professors of it, and horrible contempt of all close walking with God), I cannot easily and readily believe. Should he add to them Arminius, with all that followed him in the Low Countries; their most learned Corvinus, drunk and sober; as also such among the Papists and Lutherans as are his companions in this work; and swell them all with the rhetoric of his commendations until they break,—I dare say he will never be able, before indifferent judges, to make out his assertion of the excellency of their writings for the furtherance of holiness, compared with the labours of those great and holy souls who have, both among ourselves and abroad, laboured in the work I am at present engaged in. The world of men professing the reformed religion have long since, in their judgments, determined this difference, nor doth it deserve any farther debate.

2. "That those who maintain the perseverance of the saints are sore, indeed, in their exhortations to holiness, but contemptible in their principles, upon which they should build those exhortations," is an insinuation that Mr Goodwin sometimes makes use of, handsomely to beg the thing in question, when he despairs to carry it by any convincing argument in a fair dispute. That the principles of this doctrine are eminently serviceable to the furtherance and promotion of holiness hath been formerly evinced beyond all possibility of contradiction from them who in any measure understand what true godliness is and wherein it doth consist. Neither ought Mr Goodwin, if he would be esteemed as a man *disputing* for his persuasion, so often to *beg* the thing in question, knowing full well that he hath not so deserved of them with whom he hath to do as to obtain any thing of this nature, on those terms, at their hands.

3. What was the judgment of the *primitive Christians*, as in others, so in and about this head of Christian religion, is best known from that rule of doctrine which it is confessed they attended unto, being delivered unto them, and in the defence whereof, and to give testimony whereto, so many thousands of them "loved not their lives unto the death." Of those that committed over to posterity any thing of their thoughts in that space of time limited by Mr Goodwin (namely, three hundred years), he names but two; of whom I shall only say, that if they failed in their apprehensions of the truth in this matter, it is not the only thing wherein they so failed. And yet that it can be [made] evident in the least that they were consenting in judgment

with Mr Goodwin wherein from us he differs is absolutely denied. This elsewhere is already farther considered. It is a common observation, and not destitute of a great evidence of truth, that the liberty of expression which is used by men in the delivery of any doctrine, especially if it be done *obiter*, by the way, before some opposition hath been framed and stated thereunto, hath given advantage to those following of them (when death hath prevented all possibility for them to explain themselves and their own thoughts) to draw them into a participation with them in that which their souls abhorred. The plea of Arius and his associates concerning the judgment of the doctors of the church in the days before him about the great article of our faith, the deity of Christ, is known. That there are in many of the ancients sundry expressions seemingly varying from that doctrine we assert, upon the account of their different apprehensions of the terms of "faith," being "regenerated," "holiness," and the like (which are all of them still with us, as in the Scripture, of various significations, and not clearly expressive of any one sense intended by them, until distinguished), is not denied. Speaking of all those who had been baptized and made profession of their faith as "believers," it is no wonder if they granted that some believers might fall away; but yet, in the meantime, the most eminent of them constantly affirmed that there is a sort of believers who, upon the matter with them, were the only true and real believers (being such as we formerly described) that could not fall either totally or finally. But as for this, I hope full satisfaction is tendered the learned reader in the preface of this discourse. So that, these exceptions notwithstanding, the prejudices that Mr Goodwin's doctrine labours under, from the opposition made to it and against it, in the defence of that which it riseth up to overthrow, by that generation of the saints of God, lies upon the shoulders thereof as a burden too heavy for it to bear.

Secondly, Mr Goodwin farther proceeds, sect. 25, to inform us of some other mistakes in the instance given to make good the former observation; for as for Calvin, Musculus, Martyr, Bucer, with the ministers of this nation who in the last generation so zealously opposed the persecutions and innovations of some returning with speed and violence to Rome, he tells us "they were very far from having their judgments settled as to the doctrine under contest, so as resolvedly to have embraced the one and rejected the other."

I should willingly walk in the high way for the manifestation and clear eviction of the untruth of this suggestion,—namely, by producing their testimonies in abundant, plentiful manner, to confirm their clearness and resolution in the truth we profess, with their zealous endeavours for the establishment, confirmation, and propa-

gation of it,—but that some few considerations delivered me from engaging in so facile a task; for,—

1. I am not able to persuade myself that any man who ever read the writings of the first sort of men mentioned, and knows the constant doctrine to this day of the churches which they planted and watered, or ever did hear of the latter, will entertain this assertion of Mr Goodwin's with any thing but admiration upon what grounds he should make it. And,—

2. Himself discovering in part on what account he doth it,—namely, because of their exhortations to watchfulness, carefulness, and close walking with God, with their denunciations of threatenings to them that abide not in the faith, which he fancies to be inconsistent with the doctrine of perseverance, as by him opposed (which inconsistency we have long since fully manifested to be the issue and offspring of his own imagination, begotten of it by the cunning sophistry of his Pelagian friends),—I know not why I should farther insist upon the wiping away of this reproach cast upon those blessed souls whom God so magnified in the work of the gospel of his Son in their generation. I remember Navaret, a Dominican friar, upon his observation of the subtilties of the Jesuits to wrest many sayings of the ancients in favour of their opinions in those doctrines wherein those two orders are at variance, affirms, "That he was afraid that when he was dead, although he had written and disputed so much against them, they would produce him for a testimony and witness on their side." What he feared concerning himself, Mr Goodwin hath attempted concerning many more worthy persons. Cutting off sentences from what goes before and follows after, restraining general expressions, imposing his own hypothesis on his reader in making application of what he quotes out of any author, he hath spent one whole chapter to persuade the world that men of as great abilities and judgments as any in the world since the apostles fell asleep have usually expressed themselves in a direct contradiction to what they are eminently and notoriously known, as their professed, deliberate judgments, to have maintained!

Thirdly, He farther informs us how this doctrine of the perseverance of the saints came to be so generally entertained by the godly, zealous, and able ministers of this nation, that when we see how they fell into it, their testimony given thereto may be of less validity with us.

"This," he telleth you, "was the permission of Mr Perkins' judgment to be overruled by the texts of Scripture commonly insisted on for the proof of this doctrine. The great worth of the person commended, therefore, the worth of the opinion; and he verily believeth, as men were then induced to receive this opinion, so to a relinquishment of it they want nothing but the countenance and authority of

some person of popular acceptance to go before them. And the reason he giveth of this his faith is the observation of the principles they usually hold forth, especially in the applicatory part of their sermons."

Ans. What and who they were who are thus represented by Mr Goodwin, in their receiving and embracing of that doctrine which, with the great travail of their souls, all their days they preached, and pressed to and upon others, is known to all. The persons I named before, one of them only excepted, with all those eminent burning and shining lights which for so many years have laboured with renown and success, to the astonishment of the world, in the preaching of the gospel in this nation, are the men intended. Doubtless such thoughts have not in former days been entertained of them, however the contemplation of any man's own ability may now raise him to contempt of them. Mr Perkins received this doctrine, and therefore all the godly ministers of this nation did so too! If any one of the like esteem with him did fall off from it (now whom they should obtain to lead them, of equal reputation and acceptance with him who hath in vain attempted it, I know not), they would quickly follow, not like shepherds but sheep, into an opposition thereunto! Those who have not very slight thoughts of them,—which doubtless they that are fallen asleep did not deserve,—will scarcely suppose that they entertained a truth of so great importance as this upon so easy terms as these insinuated, or that they would have parted with it at so cheap a rate.

Farther; why the ministers of England should be thought to entertain this doctrine merely upon the authority and countenance of Mr Perkins given thereunto, when the universality of the teachers of all other reformed churches, of the same confession in other things with them, did also embrace the same doctrine, and do continue in profession of it to this day, what reason can be assigned? Had there been a particular inducement to the ministers of England for the receiving of it, which was altogether foreign unto them who as to our nation are foreigners, whence is it that there should be such a coincidence of their judgments with them therein? or why may not ours be thought to take it upon the same account with them, upon whose judgments and understandings the authority of Mr Perkins cannot be supposed to have had any influence? Is Mr Goodwin the only person who in this nation hath impartially weighed all things of concernment to the refusing or embracing any matters or doctrines in religion? Have no others, in the sincerity of their hearts, searched the Scriptures, and earnestly begged the guidance of the Spirit, according to that encouraging promise left by their Master that they should receive him so doing? The good Lord take away from us all high thoughts of ourselves, and all contempt of them that profess the fear

of the Lord, with whom we have to do! For the reason of Mr Goodwin's faith in this thing, concerning the readiness of the godly ministers of this nation to apostatize from the doctrine of the saints' perseverance,—namely, their manifesting themselves to be possessed of many principles of a contrary tendency unto it in the applicatory part of their sermons,—the vanity of it hath been long since discovered, so that there is no farther need to lay open the unreasonableness thereof.

Mr Goodwin, mistrusting his ability to persuade men that the persons of whom he hath discoursed were not clear in their judgments as to an opposition to that doctrine which he positively owneth and zealously contendeth for, and knowing that it cannot be denied but that they were men of eminency for godliness and close walking in communion with God all their days, yet excepteth, as his last refuge, "That it cannot be manifested that this opinion had the least influence in their pious conversation, which is wholly to be ascribed to other commendable principles that they embraced." This, indeed, may be said of any part of the doctrine whatsoever that they received, and some of them suffered for. Atheists may say it of the whole profession of Christianity, and ascribe the goodness of the lives of the best of them that profess it to some other principles common to them with the residue of mankind, and not at all to any of those whereby they are distinguished as such. This they professed to have a powerful efficacy to prevail with them for that exactness in walking with God which, by his grace, they attained unto; and why they should not be believed herein, as far as any men whatever, bearing the like testimony to any doctrine whatever, I know not. Besides, the intendment of this instance of the persons and their piety who formerly believed and spake forth this doctrine was, to manifest, by an eminent experiment, that there was not in it, nor is, any tendency to a contrary frame unto piety and holiness, which it is injuriously charged withal; and if by the consideration thereof we do not obtain that it hath a proper and direct serviceableness to the promotion of godliness, yet at least we have a convincing demonstration that it is no way obstructive to it.

Nextly, sect. 26, Mr Goodwin entereth upon his defensative to the charge against his doctrine whose foundation is laid in the unworthiness of its authors in this nation, before it fell upon his hand. These he confesseth to be the worst of our late bishops, with such as Romanized and tyrannized among them, with their clergy creatures and favourites, persons many of them of superstition, looseness, and much profaneness. Of the apology shaped for the clearing of the doctrine he maintaineth from a participation with them in their unworthiness, there are three parts; in the first whereof he denieth that "this doctrine did any way induce them to the looseness that was

found upon them," in the other two he giveth as many reasons of their receiving of it and cleaving to it.

As for the first part, I shall willingly assent to him that the holiness or unholiness of professors is not to be charged on the religion they profess (I mean appearing holiness, in the profession of it), unless there be an evidence of a connection betwixt their principles and practices; which in this case, to us and our apprehension of them who charge this doctrine with the miscarriages of those men, there is; at least, we may insist on this, that there is a suitableness in the whole system of the doctrine, whereof the apostasy of the saints is an eminent parcel, to that frame of spirit which is in men of loose and superstitious ways, enemies of the grace of God and power of godliness. Neither can there any other reason be tolerably assigned or alleged for the embracement of that doctrine by those persons formerly mentioned, but only their ignorance of and enmity to the great mysteries of the gospel, the covenant of grace, with union, communion, and close walking with God. A design was upon them, written with the beams of the sun, to cry up a barren, outside, light, and loose profession, with a vain, superstitious, self-invented worship of God, instead of the power of a gospel conversation and ordinances of Christ according to his appointment. Seeking after a "righteousness, as it were, by the works of the law," and being ignorant of the righteousness of Christ, they found the whole doctrine whose defence Mr Goodwin hath lately undertaken suited to their principles and aims; and therefore with greediness drank it down like water, until they were swelled with the dropsy of pride and self-conceit beyond what they could bear. Whatever be now pretended, it was little disputed then, and in those days which Mr Goodwin pointeth unto, but that looseness of life, inclination to Popery, and enmity to the power of godliness, were at the bottom of the entertainment of the Arminian principles by that generation of men.

But Mr Goodwin proceedeth to alleviate this charge, and informs us thus: "That if the soundness and rottenness of opinions should be esteemed by the goodness or badness of the lives of any parcel or number of persons professing the same, as well the opinion of atheism, which denieth the being of any god, as the opinion of polytheism, which affirmeth the plurality of gods, must be esteemed better and more sound than that which maintaineth the being of one God, and of one only; for certain it is that there have been many heathens professors, some of the one and some of the other of these opinions, who have quitted themselves upon fairer terms of honour and approbation in their lives than many Christians professing the last opinion have done."

I am not willing to wring this nose too far, lest blood should

follow. The lives of many atheists and pagans are preferred before the lives of many professing Christianity. By "professors of Christianity" Mr Goodwin intendeth those who are so indeed, and seasoned with the power of the principles of that religion, or such only as, making an outward profession of it, are indeed acted with principles quite of another nature, which, notwithstanding all their profession, rendereth them, in the truth of the thing itself, "enemies of the cross of Christ, whose end is destruction, whose god is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame," Phil. iii. 18, 19. If the former be intended, as the assertion is most false, the gospel only effectually "teaching men to deny all ungodliness, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world," so it tendeth directly to the highest derogation from the honour of our Lord Jesus Christ and of his glorious gospel. He that would be thoroughly acquainted with the notorious untruth of this insinuation, let him a little consult Tertullian, Arnobius, Lactantius, Austin, and others, handling the lives and conversations of the best of the polytheists and heathens before and in their days; if he be not contented to take a shorter course, and rest in the authority of the apostle, or rather of the Holy Ghost, describing them and their conversation to the life, as they lay under the just hardening judgments of God, Rom. i. 18, to the end. If the latter sort of men, *called* Christians, be intended, the comparison instituted between them and atheists is to no purpose, they themselves being disclaimed and disowned by Christ and his gospel, and reckoned among them with whom they are compared: so that, upon the matter, this is but the comparing one sort of atheists with another, and giving in a judgment, that of all, those are worst whose practices are so, and who yet pacify their own consciences and deceive the world with a pretence and flourish of a glorious profession.

I shall not now enter upon any long inquiry what influence the ungodly and profane lives of any ought to have upon the judgment of men in discovering and discerning of the doctrines that they bring, especially if such as consent in any doctrine do also concur in a dissoluteness of conversation. That it will be of no small consideration, the experience of all ages hath evinced. The Athenians refused a virtuous law, because the person was vicious who proposed it; and it is generally esteemed that there is a correspondency betwixt the principles and practices of those men who earnestly profess the promotion of those principles, so that they are mutual producers and advantagers one of another. This is all at present that was aimed at in the charge upon Mr Goodwin's doctrine, which he undertakes to waive: It was generally embraced, at its first broaching in our world, only by men of a loose and scandalous conversation, superstitious in their ways of worship, and enemies of the power of godliness; which being

confessed, for the argument from thence, "valeat quantum valere potest."

But Mr Goodwin giveth us two reasons why this doctrine of his was so gladly received and zealously asserted by that generation of men. The first, which, he telleth you, is plain and easy to be given in, is this: "Being professed enemies to the most religious and zealous preachers and ministers of the land, with their adherents, whom they termed 'Puritans,' whom they both hated and feared, as a generation of men by whom, rather than any other, they apprehended themselves in danger of being dethroned, 'Nec eos fefellit opinio.' Upon this ground they judged it a very material point of their interest to oppose and keep under this 'faction,' as they termed them. In order thereunto, they studied and cast about how to weaken their interest and repute with the generality of the people, or at least with all those that were intelligent, and in that respect considerable; to this end wisely considering that nothing was like to prejudice them more in their esteem with most men than to detect them of error and unsoundness in their doctrine; and perceiving withal (as with half an eye they might, being so fully disengaged as they were from all high thoughts of those that held them) that they were not in any doctrine besides, which they were generally known to hold and teach, more obnoxious to such a detection than in those which they held and taught in opposition to the Remonstrants, hereupon they politically fell to profess and teach Remonstrantism, that so they might have the more frequent occasion and opportunity to lay open the puritan doctrine before the people, and to show the inconsistency of it with the Scriptures, as also with many of the most manifest principles as well of reason as religion besides."

Ans. That this is a most vain and groundless conjecture, I presume any one that will but cast back his thoughts upon the posture of affairs during the reign of that generation of men, and a little consider the ways and means whereby they were, through the righteous hand of God, reduced to that condition and state wherein they now are, will quickly determine. The truth is, they were so far from advantaging themselves against their adversaries, and prevailing upon them, in the esteem of the most rational and knowing men in the nation, by their entertaining the Arminian doctrine, that utterly, on the other side, they dishonoured their cause of ceremonies, discipline, and conformity, which with success they had so long carried on with the generality of the nation, and exposed themselves to the power of the people of the land in parliament, from whence, as to all other differences, they were sheltered by an appearance of legal constitutions; so that, after some forward person of that faction (the most contemptible, indeed, as to any real worth, one or two individuals only excepted, of the whole tribe) had, upon the grounds forementioned,

taken up and made profession of the opinions and doctrine we are speaking of, they fell daily before their adversaries as to the esteem of all, or at least the greatest part, of those who cordially and thoroughly adhered to them as to the discipline and worship then established. Certainly the prelatical party themselves will not say they prevailed on that hand, as to any ends and purposes for the establishment of their interest, or making good their ground against their opposers. Nay, the most sober and learned of that sort of men do to this day ascribe, in no small measure, the downfall of the whole fabric whereof they were parts and members to the precipitating rashness and folly of some few in advancing and pressing the Arminian errors that they themselves were given up unto. As for the zealous and godly ministers of the nation, usually termed "Puritans" (who are here acknowledged by Mr Goodwin to have all generally opposed the doctrine he striveth to build up), though they had in many parliaments, wherein the most intelligent and rational men of the nation are usually convened, made by their friends sundry attempts for their relief against the persecutions of the others,—as is evidenced by their petitions and addresses still on record,—yet they were never able to obtain the least redress of their grievances, nor to get one step of ground against their adversaries, until the advantage of their Arminianism was administered unto them; on which, by several degrees, they prevailed themselves in the issue to the utter breaking of the yoke of their taskmasters. It is true, He who "taketh the crafty in their own imaginations, and mixeth the counsel of the wise with madness and folly, causing them to err in their ways as a drunken man in his vomit," doth oftentimes turn the devices of men upon their own heads, and make those things subservient to their ruin which they fixed upon as the most expedient mediums for their establishment and continuance,—such perhaps was the case with them in their canonical oath, attempted to be imposed in one of their last convocations,—but that the taking up and asserting of the Arminian doctrine was a design of that party of men to get upon the judgments and affections of the people, and to expose the puritanical preachers to their contempt and reproach, is an imagination that cannot lightly fall upon any one who had his eyes open in the days wherein those things were publicly acted on the stage of this nation. For that insinuation in the close of Mr Goodwin's discourse, concerning the advantages given that sort of men by the inconsistency of the doctrine of the Puritans, which they opposed, with the principles of religion and reason, I shall only say, that it being once more, through the providence of God, called forth to a public debate, it neither standeth nor falleth to the judgment of any single man, much less of one who is professedly engaged in an opposition thereunto.

Another reason, of the same evidence with the former, is tendered in these words: "It is generally known that the cathedral generation of men throughout Christendom were generally great admirers of the old learning (as some call it), I mean the writings and tenets of the fathers, and of Austin more especially, and that they frequently made shield and buckler of their authority to defend themselves against the pens and opinions of later writers, whom their manner was, according to the exigency of their interest (at least as they conceived), to slight and vilify in comparison of the others. Now, the judgment of the fathers more generally, and of Austin more particularly, stood for the possibility of the saints' defection, both total and final, wherein it seemeth the greater part of our modern reformed divines have departed from them."

That this pretence is no whit better than that before will be evidenced by the light of this one consideration, namely, that those among the bishops and their adherents who were indeed most zealous of, and best versed in, the writings of the fathers, were generally of the same judgment about the grace of Christ and the will of man, etc., with the residue of the reformed churches and the puritan preachers of our own nation. They were a company of sciolists in comparison, and men of nothing, who arminianized; men, as the bishop of Lincoln once told them, whose "learning lay in a few unlearned liturgies." It is true, they had gotten to such a head and to such a height, not long before their fall, that they were ready to accuse and charge their associates as to discipline, worship, and ceremony of Puritanism; who failed not to retort Arminianism and Popery back again to them. We know who said of the others that they were "tantum non in episcopatu Puritani;" and who returned to him and his associates, "Tantum non uxoratu Pontificii." The truth is, those among them, as there were many among them, both bishops and men (as they speak and think) of inferior orders, who were solidly learned, especially in the writings of the ancients (of whom many are yet alive, but some are fallen asleep), were universally, almost to a man, of the same judgment with Calvin in the heads of our religion under consideration. Jewell, Abbot, Morton, Usher, Hall, Davenant, and Prideaux (great names among the world of learned men), with a considerable retinue of men of repute for literature and devotion (with whom on no account whatever the arminianizing party of the prelates and their followers are to be named the same day), have sufficiently testified their thoughts in this matter to all the world. From what ambiguity of expression it is that any sentence is stolen from Austin and others of the ancients, seeming to countenance the doctrine of the saints' apostasy, hath been elsewhere discovered, and may farther be manifested as occasion shall be administered. And without pretence to any great skill

in the old learning, this I dare assert (whereof I have given some account in the preface to the reader), that not one of the ancients, much less Austin, did ever maintain such an apostasy of saints and such a perseverance as that which Mr Goodwin contendeth for.

This being that which Mr Goodwin hath to offer for the clearing of the doctrine he maintaineth from the first two parts of the charge exhibited against it, he applieth himself, in the last place, to contend with a common observation made by Christians weighing and pondering the principles and ways of men in the days wherein we live, namely, "The degeneracy of the most of men who at any time embrace it from their former profession, and their turning aside to the paths of looseness and folly;"—an observation which, if true (though Mr Goodwin is pleased to assert that any considering man, like himself, will laugh it to scorn), will not easily be digested in the thoughts of them that are willing to weigh aright the usual presence of God with his truths, especially at the first embracement and entertainment of them. Neither will this observation be diverted from pursuing the doctrine against which it is lifted up, by comparing it with that of "the unhappiness of marriages made between cousins-german," there being nothing in that relation that should be a disposing cause to any such issue as is pretended; much less with that farther observation, that some "apostatize from the protestant religion, yea, from Christianity itself;" there being not the least parity, or indeed analogy, in the instances. If it might be affirmed of men, that after their embracing of Christianity or the protestant religion, they generally decline and grow worse, as to their moral conversation, than they were before, I do not know at present what apology could be readily fixed on that might free the one and the other from grievous scandal. To fall from a profession of any religion, or any head or part of a religion, upon the account of the corruption that is in them that so fall from it, is rather an honour than a reproach to the religion so deserted. But, in and upon the embracement of any religion or doctrine in religion, for men to decline from that which is the proper end of all true religion (which is the observation that riseth up against the doctrine Mr Goodwin asserteth, in reference to very many that embrace it), doubtless is not the crown and glory of that which they profess. Neither is this observation built on so slight experience as to be muzzled with proverbs of swallows and woodcocks, the streets of our cities and paths of our villages being full of those fowls, or rather foul spirits, that give strength unto it.

This is the whole of what Mr Goodwin thought good to tender for the protection of his doctrine from the charge laid down at the entrance of this digression; on the consideration whereof, I doubt not but it is evident how unable he is to shield it from the wound

intended unto it thereby. And shall we now, can we, entertain any other thoughts of it but that (having constantly hitherto been denied and opposed by the most zealous, painful, godly, successful preachers of the gospel that these latter ages have been, through the goodness of God, blessed withal, entertained chiefly by men of loose, dissolute principles and practices, enemies to the power of godliness and the profession thereof, and strongly suspected to corrupt the minds and conversations of men that do embrace it) it is the only serviceable relief and assistance for the making of the ministry of the gospel useful and fruitful, ingenerating holiness and obedience in the lives and ways of men?

CHAPTER XIV.

ARGUMENT AGAINST THE DOCTRINE FROM THE EXHORTATIONS OF THE GOSPEL.

Mr G.'s third argument proposed and considered—The drama borrowed by Mr G. to make good this argument—The frame of speech ascribed to God by the Remonstrants, according to our doctrine, weighed and considered—The dealing of God with man, and the importance of his exhortations, according to the doctrine of the saints' perseverance, manifested—In what sense and to what end exhortations and threatenings are made to believers—The fallacious ground of this argument of Mr G.—Mr G.'s fourth argument proposed to consideration, considered—Eternal life, how and in what sense a reward of perseverance—The enforcement of the major proposition considered—The proposition new moulded, to make it of concernment to our doctrine, and denied, from the example of the obedience of Jesus Christ—Efficacy of grace not inconsistent with reward—The argument enforced with a new consideration—That consideration examined and removed—Farther of the consistency of effectual grace and gospel exhortations.

A THIRD argument is proposed, sect. 18, chap. xiii., in these words: "That doctrine which representeth God as weak, incongruous, and incoherent with himself, in his applications unto men, is not from God, and consequently that which contradicteth it must needs be the truth; but the doctrine of perseverance, opposed by us, putteth this great dishonour upon God, representeth him weak, incongruous, etc.: *ergo.*" For the proof of the minor proposition, to make good the charge in it exhibited against the doctrine of perseverance, there is a dramatical scheme induced (to whose framing and application Mr Goodwin contributed no more but the pains of a translator, taking it from the Anti-synod., pp. 276, 277), in these words: "'You that truly believe in my Son, and have been once made partakers of my Holy Spirit, and therefore are fully persuaded and assured, from my will and command given unto you in that behalf, yea, according to the infallible word of truth which you have from me, that you cannot possibly, no, not by all the most horrid sins and abominable prac-

tices that you shall or can commit, fall away either totally or finally from your faith,—for in the midst of your foulest actions and courses there remains a seed in you which is sufficient to make you true believers, and to preserve you from falling away finally, so that it is impossible you should die in your sins; you that know and are assured that I will, by an irresistible hand, work perseverance in you, and consequently that you are out of all danger of condemnation, and that heaven and salvation belong unto you, and are as good as yours already, so that nothing but giving of thanks appertains to you, which also you know that I will, do what you will in the meantime, necessitate you unto;—you, I say, that are fully and thoroughly persuaded and possessed with the truth of all these things, I earnestly charge, admonish, exhort, and beseech, that you take heed to yourselves that ye continue in the faith, that there be not at any time an evil heart of unbelief in any to depart from the living God, that you fall not from your own steadfastness. Yea, I declare and profess unto you, that if you shall draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in you; that if you shall deny me, I will deny you; that if you be again overcome of the lusts of the world, and be entangled therewith, your latter end shall be worse than your beginning; that if you shall turn away, all your former righteousness shall not be remembered, but you shall die in your sins, and suffer the vengeance of eternal fire. On the other hand, if you shall continue to the end, my promise is that you shall be saved. Therefore, strive to enter in at the strait gate, quit yourselves like men, labour for the meat that endureth unto everlasting life, and be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises.' He that shall duly weigh and consider what a senseless and indeed ridiculous incongruity there is between these exhortations, adjurations, threatenings, and latter promises, and those declarations, applications, and former promises, doubtless will confess that either the one or the other of them are not from God or according to the mind of God."

Ans. The incongruity of this fiction with the doctrine it is framed against is so easily manifested, that it will not much concern us to consider the incongruity that the several parts of it have one with another; for,—

First, The whole foundation of this *fanatic fabric* is ridiculous in itself, and ridiculously imposed on the doctrine of perseverance: for whereas it says not that all saints have any comfortable *assurance* of their perseverance, and so may, by all gospel ways whatever, by promises and threatenings, be stirred up to the use of those means whereby perseverance is wrought and assurance obtained; so it says that no one saint in the world ever had, can have, or was taught to expect his perseverance, or the least sense or assurance of it, under

such an uncouth supposition as falling into and continuing in sins and abominations. The promises they have to assure them of their inseparable abode with God to the end are, "that he will write his law in their hearts, and put his fear in their inward parts, that they shall never depart from him;" and that they shall be kept up thereto by the use of means suitable, as appointed of God for the attaining of the end proposed, being "kept by the power of God," but "through faith, unto salvation." God doth not call (nor doth the doctrine of the perseverance of the saints, or of the stability and unchangeableness of his promises in Christ to believers, assert it) any to believe that they shall never fall away from him, what sins and rebellions soever they fall into; neither hath he promised any such thing unto them, but only that he will, through his grace, preserve them in the use of means from such rebellions as are inconsistent with his love and free acceptation through Christ, according to the tenor of the covenant of grace. So that instead of the first part of this fiction, whose inconsistency with the latter is after argued, let this, according to the analogy of our doctrine, be substituted:—

"You that truly believe in my Son Jesus Christ, and are made partakers of my Holy Spirit, who being heirs of the promises, and so have a right to that abundant consolation, that joy in believing, which I am willing all of you should receive, I know your fears, doubts, perplexities, and temptations, your failings, sins, and backslidings, and what sad thoughts, on the account of the evil of your own hearts and ways, you are exposed to,—as, that you shall never abide nor be able to continue with me and in my love to the end. Let the feeble knees be strengthened, and the hands that hang down be lifted up. Behold, I have ordained good works for you to walk in, as the way wherein you are to walk for the attainment of the end of your faith, the salvation of your souls. And to quicken you and stir you up hereunto, I have provided and established effectual ordinances, revealed in the word of my grace; whereunto you are to attend, and in the use of them, according to my mind, to grow up into holiness, in all manner of holy conversation, watching, fighting, resisting, contending with and against all the spiritual enemies of your souls. And as for me, this is my covenant with you, that my Spirit, which gives efficacy to all the means, ordinances, and advantages of gospel obedience, which I have afforded unto you, by whom I will fulfil in you all the good pleasure of my goodness, and the work of faith with power, so making you meet for the inheritance of the saints in light, and preserving you to my heavenly kingdom, shall never depart from you; so that you, also, having my law written in your hearts, shall never utterly and wickedly depart from me. And for such sins and follies as you shall be overtaken withal, I will graciously heal your backslidings, and receive you freely."

This is the language of the doctrine we maintain; which is not, we full well know, obnoxious to any *exceptions* or *consequences* whatever, but such as bold and prejudiced men, for the countenance of their vain conceits and opinions, will venture at any time to impose and fasten on the most precious truths of the gospel. That God should say to believers, as is imposed on him, "fall into what sins they will, or abominations they can, yet he will have them believe that, by an irresistible hand, he will necessitate them to persevere," —that is, in and under their apostasy, which is evidently implied in their falling into sins and abominations in the manner insisted on,—is a ridiculous fiction, to the imagination whereof the least colour is not supplied by the doctrine intended to be traduced thereby.

Secondly, For the ensuing *exhortations*, promises, and threatenings, as far as they are really evangelical, whose use and tendency is argued to be inconsistent with the doctrine before proposed, I have formerly manifested what is their proper use and efficacy in respect of believers; and their consistency with the truth we maintain, apprehended as it is indeed, and not vizarded with ugly and dreadful appearances, will, I presume, scarcely be called in question by any who, having "received a kingdom that cannot be moved," do know what it is to "serve God acceptably, with reverence and godly fear." It is true, they are made unto, and have their use in reference unto, them that believe and shall persevere therein; but they are not given unto them as men assured of their perseverance, but as men called to the use of means for the establishing of their souls in the ways of obedience. They are not, in the method of the gospel, *irrationally happed* on such intimations of unchangeable love, or proposed under such wild *conditionals* and *suppositions* as here by our author; but annexed to the appointment of those ways of grace and peace which God calls his saints unto, being suited to work upon the new nature wherewith they are endued, as spreading itself over all the faculties of their rational souls, wherein are principles fit to be excited to operation by exhortations and promises.

Thirdly, All that is indeed *argumentative* in this discourse is built on this foundation, that a spiritual assurance of attaining the *end* by the use of means is discouraging and dissuasive to the use of those means;—a proposition so uncouth in itself, so contradictory to the experience of all the saints of God, so derogatory to the glory and honour of Jesus Christ himself (who in all his obedience had, doubtless, an assurance of the end of it all), as any thing that can well fall into the imaginations of the hearts of men. Might not the devil have thus replied unto our Saviour, when he tempted him to turn stones into bread, and to cast himself from a pinnacle of the temple, and received answer that "Man shall not live by bread

alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God:" "But, alas! thou Jesus, the Son of the living God, that art persuaded thou art so, and that God will preserve thee, whether thou usest any means or no, that thou shalt never be starved for want of bread, nor hurt thyself by any fall, whatever thou dost, the angels having charge that no evil shall come nigh thee, nor thy foot be hurt against a stone, thou mayst now cast thyself headlong from the temple, to manifest thy assurance of the love and faithfulness of God in his promises to thee?" If our Saviour thought it sufficient to stop the mouth of the devil, to manifest from Scripture that notwithstanding the assurance from God that any one hath of the end, yet he is to use the means tending thereunto (a neglect whereof is a sinful tempting of God), we shall not need to go farther for an answer to the same kind of objection in the mouth of any adversary whatever.

His 19th section containeth his fourth argument, in these words:—

"If there be no possibility of the saints falling away finally, then is their persevering incapable of reward from God; but their final perseverance is not incapable of reward from God: *ergo.* The minor proposition, I presume, contains nothing but what is the sense of those who deny the conclusion; or, however, it contains nothing but what is the express sense of the Lord Christ, where he saith, that 'He that endureth to the end, the same shall be saved.' Therefore I suppose we shall be excused from farther proof of this, without any prejudice to the cause in hand."

Ans. I grant eternal life may be called the *reward* of perseverance, in the sense that the Scripture useth that word, applied to the matter in hand. It is a reward neither procured by (properly and morally, as the deserving cause) nor proportioned unto the obedience of them by whom it is attained. A reward it is that withal is *the free gift of God*, and an inheritance purchased by Jesus Christ; a reward of *bounty*, and not of *justice*, in respect of them upon whom it is bestowed, but only of faithfulness in reference to the promise of it; a reward, by being a gracious encouragement,—as the end of our obedience, not as the procurement or desert of it. So we grant it a reward of perseverance, though these words of our Saviour, "He that endureth to the end, the same shall be saved," express a consequence of things only, and not a connection of causality of the one upon the other. Of the foundation of this discourse concerning a possibility of declining, immediate consideration shall be had. He proceeds, then:—

"The consequence of the major proposition stands firm upon this foundation: No act of the creature whereunto it is necessitated, or which it cannot possibly decline or but do, is, by any law of God or rule of justice, rewardable. Therefore, if the saints be necessitated

by God to persevere finally, so that he leaves unto them no possibility of declining finally, their final perseverance is not, according to any law of God or man, nor, indeed, to any principle of reason or equity, capable of reward, no whit more than actions merely natural are; nay, of the two, there seems to be more reason why acts merely natural (as, for example, eating, drinking, breathing, sleeping) should be rewarded, inasmuch as these flow in a way of necessity, yet from an inward principle and connatural to the agent, than such actions whereunto the agent is constrained, necessitated, and determined, by a principle of power from without, and which is not intrinsical to it."

And this is the strength of the argument, which will quickly appear to be very weakness; for,—

First, The efficacy of these expressions, "Whereunto it is necessitated, and from it they cannot possibly decline," as to their influence into this argument, ariseth clearly from their ambiguity. We deny any to be *necessitated to persevere*, or that our doctrine affirms any such thing; taking that expression to hold out a power upon their wills, in their operations, inconsistent with the utmost liberty whereof in spiritual things (having received a spiritual principle) men are capable. They are not so necessitated to persevere as that all the acts of their obedience, whereby they do persevere, should not be *free*, but *necessary*. Indeed they are not at all, nor in any sense, necessitated to persevere. There is no necessity attends their perseverance but only in respect of the event, with reference to the unchangeable purpose and infallible promise of God. The like may be said of that other expression, "Possibility of declining." God leaves in them a possibility of declining as to their way and manner of walking with him, though he leaves not to them a possibility of declining or falling totally from him as to the issue and event of the whole matter; which doth not in the least necessitate them to or in any of their operations.

Secondly, The proposition must be cast into another mould before it will be of any determinate signification in opposition to the doctrine it opposeth, and tuned to another mood before it will give a certain sound to any battle against it; and this is, That no act of the creature, that is wrought in order to the obtaining of any end promised to be certainly attained thereby, is rewardable of God (though for perseverance, it is not any act of the creature, but only a *modus* of its obedience). And thus it looks towards the concernment of this doctrine. Yet before this proposition pass, to omit sundry other things that would gladly rise to the destruction of it, I desire one query may be assailed, concerning the obedience of Jesus Christ, whether it were not necessary that the end of his obedience should follow? and whether it were not impossible he should decline from

his obedience? and if it were, whether it were impossible that God should give a reward thereunto? But,—

Thirdly, The intendment of this proposition, as far as it concerns us (and that, indeed, is with a respect to our doctrine of the efficacy of grace, and not to this of perseverance), is this, "That which is wrought in us by the effectual grace of God is not capable of reward from God;"—a proposition which, though capable of some plea and colour, taking "reward" in a purely legal sense, supposing the persons seeking after it to do it by a service and duties proportioned unto it, yet is so openly and directly contradictory to the tenor and design of God in the covenant of grace by Jesus Christ, with the whole dispensation of the Spirit given to abide with believers, for all the ends and purposes as to their obedience, as that I shall content myself to deny it, expecting Mr Goodwin's proofs of it,—when "rivers run backward, heavy things ascend," etc.

Fourthly, For the flourish added to these assertions, by comparing the acts of the saints' obedience, upon a supposition of the grace of God "working them in them," with their natural actions of "eating, drinking, sleeping," as to their tendency to exalt the glory of God in rewarding, it proceeds either from gross ignorance of the doctrine opposed, or wilful prevaricating from that light of it which he hath. Who ever taught that God's operations in and towards believers, as to their perseverance in faith and obedience, did consist in an outward constraint of an unwilling principle? God gives a principle of obedience to them,—he *writes* and implants *his law in their hearts*, and moves them effectually to act suitably to that inward principle they have so received; which, though spiritual and supernatural in respect of its rise and manner of bestowing, yet is connatural to them in respect of its being a principle of operation. We are not, then, in the least beholding to our author for his following concession, "That as a prince may give great things to them that eat, and drink, and breathe, but not as rewards; so God may give eternal life to them that are so necessitated by him to persevere, though not as a reward:" for although we will not contend with God about eternal life, that he [may] give it us under the notion of a reward, and desire to be much affected with the consideration of it as a free gift of grace, an eminent purchase of the blood of God, and look upon it merely as a reward of bounty, so called as being the end whereunto our obedience is suited, and the rest of our labours; yet we say, in an evangelical sense and acceptation it is properly so proposed to that obedience and perseverance therein which is wrought in us by the efficacy of the grace of God, as it lies in a tendency unto that end, which to be attained by those means he hath infallibly determined.

He proceeds, therefore, to enforce his argument with a new consideration:—

"If we speak of rewards promised in order to the moving or inclining of the wills of men towards such or such actions and ways,—of which kind also the rewards mentioned in the Scriptures as yet remaining to be conferred by God upon men are,—the case is yet more clear, namely, that they are appropriate unto such actions and ways unto the election and choice whereof men are not necessitated in one kind or other, especially not by any physical or foreign power; for to what purpose should a reward be promised unto me, to persuade or make me willing to engage in such or such a course, or to perform such and such a service, in case I be necessitated to the same engagement or performance otherwise? Or what place is there left for a moral inducement where a physical necessity hath done the execution? Or, if the moral inducement hath done the execution, and sufficiently raised and engaged the will to the action, with what congruity of reason, yea, or common sense, can a physical necessity be superinduced?"

Ans. What there is more in this than what went before, unless sophistry and falsity, I see not; for,—First, Though I conceive that eternal life is proposed in the Scripture as our reward rather upon the account of supporting and cheering our spirits in the deficiencies, temptations, and entanglements attending our obedience, than directly to engage unto obedience (though consequently it doth that also), whereunto we have so many other unconquerable engagements and inducements, yet the consideration thereof in that sense also, as it moves the wills of men to actions suitable to the attainment of it, is very well consistent with the doctrine in hand. That old calumny, a hundred times repeated and insisted on in this contest, of our wills being necessitated and deprived of their choice and election, unless it could be tolerably made good, will be of no use to Mr Goodwin as to his present purpose. The whole strength of this argumentation is built on this supposal, that the effectual grace of God in its working the *will* and *deed* in believers, or the Spirit's doing of it by grace, with God's fore-determination of events, doth take away the liberty of the will, inducing into it a necessary manner of operation,—determining it to one antecedently in order of time to its own determination of itself; which is false, and no wise inferred from the doctrine under consideration. Yea, as God's *providential* concurrence with men and determination of their wills to all their actions as actions is the principle of all their natural liberty, so his *gracious* concurrence with them, or operation in them, as unto spiritual effects, working in them to will, is the principle of all their true spiritual liberty. When "the Son makes us free, then are we free indeed." The reward, then, is proposed to an understanding enlightened, a will quickened and made free by grace, to stir them up to actions suitable to them who are in expectation of so bountiful a

close of their obedience (which actions are yet wrought in them by the Spirit of God, whose fruits they are); and this to very good purpose, in the hearts of all that know what it is to walk with God, and to serve him in the midst of temptations, unless they are under the power of some such particular error as turns away their eyes from believing the truth.

Secondly, The opposition here pretended between a *physical necessitating* and a *moral inducement* for the producing of the same effect, is, in plain terms, intended between the efficacy of God's internal grace and the use of external exhortations and motives. If God give an internal principle, or spiritual habit, fitting for, inclining to, spiritual actions and duties; if he follow the work so begun in us (who yet of ourselves can do nothing, nor are sufficient to think a good thought) with continual supplies of his Spirit and grace, working daily in us, according to the exceeding greatness of his power, the things that are well pleasing in his sight;—then, though he work upon us as creatures endued with reason, understandings, wills, and affections, receiving glory from us according to the nature he hath endued us withal, all exhortations and encouragements to obedience required at our hands are vain and foolish. Now, because we think this to be the very wisdom of God, and the opposition made unto it to be a mere invention of Satan to magnify corrupted nature and decry all the efficacy of the grace of the new covenant, we must have something besides and beyond the naked assertion of our author to cause us once to believe it.

Thirdly, *The great execution that is made by moral inducement solely*, without any internally efficacious grace, in the way of gospel obedience, is often supposed, but not once attempted to be put upon the proof or demonstration. It shall, then, suffice to deny that any persuasions, outward motives, or inducements whatever, are able of themselves to raise, engage, and carry out, the will unto action, so that any good, spiritual action should be brought forth on that account, without the effectual influence and physical operation of internal grace; and Mr Goodwin is left to prove it, together with such other assertions derogatory to the free grace of God, dogmatically imposed upon his reader in this chapter, whereof some have been already remarked, and others may in due time. The residue of this section (the 19th), spent to prove that eternal life is given as a reward to perseverance,—having already manifested the full consistency of the proposition, in a gospel acceptation of the word "reward," with whatever we teach of the perseverance of the saints,—I suppose myself unconcerned in; and therefore, passing by the triumphant conclusion of this argument, asserting an absolute power in men to exhibit or decline from obedience, I shall go on to that which, in my apprehension, is of more importance, and will give

occasion to a discourse, I hope, not unuseful or unprofitable to the reader. I shall therefore assign it a peculiar place and chapter to itself.

CHAPTER XV.

ARGUMENT AGAINST THE DOCTRINE FROM THE SINS OF BELIEVERS.

Mr G.'s fifth argument for the apostasy of true believers—The weight of this argument taken from the sins of believers—The difference between the sins of believers and unregenerate persons proposed to consideration, James i. 14, 15—The rise and progress of lust and sin—The fountain of all sin in all persons is lust, Rom. vii. 7—Observations clearing the difference between regenerate and unregenerate persons in their sinning, as to the common fountain of all sin—The first—The second, of the universality of lust in the soul by nature—The third, in two inferences: the *first*, unregenerate men sin with their whole consent; the *second* inference, concerning the reign of sin and reigning sin—The fourth, concerning the universal possession of the soul by renewing grace—The fifth, that true grace bears rule wherever it be—Inferences from the former considerations—The *first*, that in every regenerate person there are diverse principles of all moral operations—Rom. vii. 19–22, opened—The *second*, that sin cannot reign in a regenerate person—The *third*, that regenerate persons sin not with their whole consent—Answer to the argument at the entrance proposed—Believers never sin with their whole consent and wills—Mr G.'s attempt to remove the answer—His exceptions considered and removed—Plurality of wills in the same person, in the Scripture sense—Of the opposition between flesh and Spirit—That no regenerate person sins with his full consent proved—Of the Spirit and his lustings in us—The actings of the Spirit in us free, not suspended on any conditions in us—The same farther manifested—Mr G.'s discourse of the first and second motions of the Spirit considered—The same considerations farther carried on—Peter Martyr's testimony considered—Rom. vii. 19–22, considered—Difference between the opposition made to sin in persons regenerate and that in persons unregenerate farther argued—Of the sense of Rom. vii., and in what sense believers do the works of the flesh—The close of these considerations—The answer to the argument at the entrance of the chapter opened—The argument new formed—The major proposition limited and granted, and the minor denied—The proof of the major considered—Gal. v. 21; Eph. v. 5, 6; 1 Cor. vi. 9, 10—Believers how concerned in comminations—Threatenings proper to unbelievers for their sins—Farther objections proposed and removed—Of the progress of lust in tempting to sin—The effect of lust in temptations—Difference between regenerate and unregenerate persons as to the tempting of lust: 1. In respect of universality; 2. Of power—Objections answered—Whether believers sin only out of infirmity—Whether believers may sin out of malice and with deliberation—Of the state of believers who upon their sin may be excommunicated—Whether the body of Christ may be dismembered—What body of Christ it is that is intended—Mr G.'s thoughts to this purpose examined—Mr G.'s discourse of the way whereby Christ keeps or may keep his members examined—Members of Christ cannot become members of Satan—1 Cor. vi. 15 considered—Of the sense and use of the word ἅρας—Christ takes his members out of the power of Satan, gives up none to him—Repetition of regeneration asserted by the doctrine of apostasy—The repetition disproved—

Mr G.'s notion of regeneration examined at large and rebuked—Relation between God and his children indissoluble—The farther progress of lust for the production of sin; it draws off and entangles—Drawing away, what it is—The difference between regenerate and unregenerate persons in their being drawn away by lust—Farther description of him who is drawn away by lust, and of the difference formerly mentioned—Of lust's enticing—How far this may befall regenerate men—To do sin, Rom. vii., what it intendeth—Lust conceiving, wherein it consists—Of the bringing forth of sin, and how far the saints of God may proceed therein—1 John iii. 9 opened—The scope of the place discovered, vindicated—The words farther opened—The proposition in the words universal—Inferences from thence—The subject of that proposition considered—Every one that is born of God, what is affirmed of them—What meant by "committing of sin"—Mr G.'s opposition to the sense of that expression given—Reasons for the confirmation of it—Mr G.'s reasons against it proposed and considered—The farther exposition of the word carried on—How he that is born of God cannot sin—Several kinds of impossibility—Mr G.'s attempt to answer the argument from this place particularly examined—The reasons of the proposition in the text considered—Of the seed of God abiding—The nature of that seed, what it is, wherein it consists—Of the abiding of this seed—Of the latter part of the apostle's reason, "he is born of God"—Our argument from the words—Mr G.'s endeavour to evade that argument—His exposition of the words removed—Farther of the meaning of the word "abideth"—The close.

Mr Goodwin's fifth argument for the saints' apostasy is taken from the consideration of the sins which they have fallen into, or possibly may so do, and it is thus proposed: sect. 20,—

"They who are in a capacity or possibility of perpetrating the works of the flesh are in a possibility of perishing, and consequently in a possibility of falling away, and that finally, from the grace and favour of God, in case they be in an estate of his grace and favour at the present; but the saints, or true believers, are in a possibility of perpetrating the works of the flesh: and therefore also they are in a possibility of perishing, and so of falling away from the grace and favour of God, wherein at present they stand. The major proposition of this argument,—to wit, They who are in a possibility of perpetrating or customarily acting the works of the flesh, are in a possibility of perishing,—is clearly proved from all such scriptures which exclude all workers of iniquity and fulfillers of the lusts of the flesh from the kingdom of God, of which sort are many: 'Of the which,' saith the apostle, speaking of the lusts of the flesh, adultery, fornication, etc., 'I tell you, as I have also told you in time past, that they who do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.' So again, 'For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God.' 'Let no man deceive you with vain words, for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience.' Yet again, 'Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God?' 'Be not

deceived, neither fornicators nor idolaters shall inherit the kingdom of God.' From such passages as these, which are very frequent in the Scriptures, it is as clear as the light of the sun at noon-day, that they who may possibly commit such sins as those specified, adultery, fornication, idolatry, may as possibly perish and be for ever excluded the kingdom of God."

Ans. Because, of all arguments whatever used against the truth we assert, this seems to me to wear the best colours on its back, and to have its face best painted, namely, with that plea of the "inconsistency of sin with the favour and acceptation of God," seeming to have a tendency to caution believers in their ways and walkings to be more careful in watching against temptations, I shall more largely insist on what the Lord hath been pleased to reveal concerning the sins and failings of such as he is yet pleased to accept in a covenant of mercy; whom though he chastens and sorely rebukes, yet he gives not their souls over unto death, nor takes his loving-kindness from them for ever. Now, because the inside and strength of this objection consists in a comparison instituted between the sins of believers and the sins of unregenerate persons, which being laid in the balance are found of equal burdensomeness unto God, and therefore are in expectance of a like reward from him, I shall in the first place, before I come in particular to answer the argument proposed, manifest the difference that is between regenerate persons and unregenerate in their sinning, and consequently also between their sins; wherein such principles shall be laid down and proved as may with an easy application remove all that is added in the farther carrying on and endeavoured vindication of the argument in hand.

A foundation of this discourse we have laid in James i. 14, 15, "But every man is tempted," saith the Holy Ghost, "when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death." The Holy Ghost discovers the fountain of all sin, and pursues it in the streams of it into the dead sea, whereinto it falls. All sin whatever is from temptation, and that which tempts to all sin is the cause of all sin. This fountain of sin is here discovered, the principal, proper, criminal cause of sin, in the beginning of verse 14. The adversative "but" is exclusive of any other faulty cause of sin that should principally fall under our consideration, especially of God, of whom mention was made immediately before. Now, this is affirmed to be every man's "lust." The general way and means that this original of all sin useth for the production of it is also discovered, and that is "temptation." Every man's own lust tempts him. The progress also it makes in carrying on of sin whereunto it tempts is farther described in the several parts and degrees of it:—1. It *draws away* and *entices,* and the persons towards whom it exerts this effi-

cacy are "drawn away and enticed;" 2. It *conceives*, "Lust conceives." The subject being prepared, answering its drawing away and enticing, without more ado it conceives sin; and then it brings forth into action,—that is, either into open perpetration or deliberate determination of its accomplishment; and then it "finisheth sin," or comes up to the whole work that sin tends to; whereunto is subjoined the dismal end and issue of this progress of sin, which is "death." Eternal death is in the womb of finished sin, and will be brought forth by it.

This being the progress of sin from the first *rise*, which is "lust," to the last *end*, which is "death," the way and path that the best and most refined unregenerate men in the world do never thoroughly forsake, though they may sometimes step out of it or be stopped in it, a way wherein whoever walks to the end may be sure to find the end, I shall consider the several particulars laid down, and show in them all, at least in the most material, the difference that is between *believers* and *unbelievers* whilst they do walk, or may walk, in this path, and then manifest where and when all saints break out of it for ever, so that they come not to the close thereof; and therein I shall give a full answer unto the whole strength and design of the argument in hand, which consisteth, as was said, in a comparison instituted between the sins and demerits of believers and unbelievers.

First, The *fountain*, principle, and cause, of all sin whatever, in all persons whatever, is "lust." Every one's *own lust* is the cause of his *own sin*. This is the mother, womb, and *fomes* of sin, which Paul says he had not been acquainted withal but by the law: Rom. vii. 7, "Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet." That which in the entrance he calls "sin" indefinitely, in the close he particularly terms "lust," as being the hidden, secret cause of all sin, and which, once discovered, swallows up the thoughts of all other sins, it being altogether in vain to deal with them, or to set a man's self in opposition to them, whilst this sinful womb of them is alive and prevalent. This is that which we call *original sin*, as to that part of it which consists in the universal alienation of our hearts from God, and unconquerable, habitual, natural inclination of them to every thing that is evil; for this sin works in us "all manner of concupiscence," Rom. vii. 8. This, I say, is the womb, cause, and principle of sin, both in believers and unbelievers, the root on which the bitter fruit of it doth grow, wherever it is. No man ever sins but it is from his own lust. And in this there is an agreement between the sins of believers and others, they are all from the same fountain; yet not such an agreement but that there is a difference herein also. For the clearing whereof observe,—

1. That by nature this lust, which is the principle of sin, is seated in all the faculties of the soul, receiving divers appellations

according to the variety of the subjects wherein it is, and is sometimes expressed in terms of *privation, want,* and *deficiency,* sometimes by *positive inclination to evil.* In the understanding, it is *blindness, darkness, giddiness, folly, madness;* in the will, *obstinacy* and *rebellion;* in the heart and affections, *pride, stubbornness, hardness, sensuality;* in all, negatively and privatively, *death;* positively, *lust, corruption, flesh, concupiscence, sin, the old man,* and the like. There is nothing in the soul of a man that hath the least influence into any action as moral but is wholly possessed with this depraved, vicious habit, and exerts itself *always* and *only* in a suitableness thereunto.

2. That this lust hath so taken possession of men by nature, that, in reference to any spiritual act or duty, they are nothing else but lust and flesh: "That which is born of the flesh is flesh," John iii. 6. It is all so, it is all spiritual flesh; that is, it is wholly and habitually corrupt, as to the doing any thing that is good. If any thing in a man might seem to be exempted, it should be his mind, the seat of all those things which are commonly called the "relics of the image of God;" but that also is flesh, as the apostle at large asserts it, Rom. viii., and "enmity against God." Neither is it of any weight which is objected, "That there is in unregenerate men the knowledge of the truth, which they retain in unrighteousness, Rom. i. 18; conscience accusing and excusing, chap. ii. 15; the knowledge of sin which is by the law, with sundry other endowments; which," they say, "doubtless are not flesh." I answer, They are all flesh, in the sense that the Scripture useth that word. The Holy Ghost speaks of nothing in man, in reference unto any duty of obedience unto God, but it is either flesh or Spirit. These two comprehend every man in the world: Every man is either in the flesh or in the Spirit, Rom. viii. The utmost improvement of all natural faculties whatever, the most complete subjection whereunto they are brought by convictions, yet leaves the same impotency in them to spiritual good as they were born withal, the same habitual inclination to sin, however entangled and hampered from going out to the actual perpetrating of it; neither are they themselves any thing the better, nor hath God any thing of that glory by them which ariseth from the willing obedience of his creatures.

3. It being the state of every man's *proper lust* which is the fountain of all sin, two things will follow:—

(1.) That in whomsoever it is, in its compass and power, as above described, as it is in every unregenerate man, however convinced of sin, he sins with his *full and whole consent.* All that is within him consents to every sin he commits. Unregenerate men sin with their whole hearts and souls. In every act their carnal minds are not, will not be, subject to the law of God. Their wills and all

their affections delight in sin; and this because there is no principle in them that should make any opposition to sin,—I mean such a spiritual opposition as would really take off from their full consent. It is true, conscience repines, witnesses against sin, reproves, rebukes, excuses or accuses: but conscience is no real principle of operation, but either a *judge* of what is done or to be done, or a *moral inducer* to doing or not doing; and whatever conscience doth, however it tumultuate, rebuke, chide, persuade, trouble, cry, and the like, whatever conviction of the guilt of sin may show into the judgment, yet sin hath the consent of the whole soul. Every thing that hath a real influence into operation consents thereto, originally and radically, however any principle may be dared by conscience. To take off any thing from full consent, there must be something of a spiritual repugnancy in the mind and will, which when lust is thus enthroned there is not.

(2.) That sin *reigneth* in such persons. Many have been the inquiries of learned men about the *reigning of sin;* as, what sins may be said to reign, and what not? whether sins of ignorance may reign as well as sins against knowledge? what little sins may be said to reign as well as great? whether frequent relapses into any sin prove that sin to be reigning? whether sin may reign in a regenerate person? or whether a saint may fall into reigning sin? whereabout divines of great note and name have differed, all upon a false bottom and supposal. The Scripture gives no ground for any such inquiries, or disputes, or cases of conscience, as some men have raised hereupon; and, indeed, I would this were the only instance of men's creating cases of conscience and answering them, when indeed and in truth there are no such things; so ensnaring the consciences of men, and entangling more by their cases than they deliver by their resolutions. The truth is, there is no mention of any reigning sin, or the reigning of any sin, in the whole book of God, taking sin for this or that particular sin; but of the reign of this indwelling, original lust, or fountain of all sin, there is frequent mention. Whilst that holds its power and universality in the soul, and is not restrained nor straitened by the indwelling Spirit of grace, with a new vital principle of no less extent and of more power than it, be the actual sins few or more, known or unknown, little or great, all is one. Sin reigns, and such a person is under the power and dominion of sin. So that, in plain terms, to have sin reign is to be unconverted; and to have sin not to reign is to be converted, to have received a new principle of life from above. This is evident from the 5th and 6th chapters of the Epistle to the Romans, the seat of this doctrine of reigning sin. The opposition insisted on by the apostle, is between the reign of sin and grace; and in pursuit thereof he manifests how true believers are translated from the one to the other. To have sin reign, is to be in a state of sin; to have grace reign, is to be in a state

of grace. So chap. v. 21, "As sin hath reigned unto death, so grace reigneth through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord." The sin he speaks of is that whereof he treats in all that chapter, the sin of nature, the lust whereof we speak. This by nature reigneth unto death; but when grace comes by Jesus Christ, the soul is delivered from the power thereof. So in the whole 6th chapter it is our change of state and condition that the apostle insists on, in our delivery from the reign of sin; and he tells us this is that that destroys it, our being under grace: Verse 14, "Sin shall not have dominion over you; for ye are not under the law, but under grace." Plainly, then, there are two lords and rulers; and these are, original or indwelling sin, and grace or the Spirit of it. The first lord the apostle discovers, with his entrance upon his rule and dominion, chap. v., and this all men by nature are under; the second he describes, chap. vi., which sets out the rule and reign of grace in believers by Jesus Christ. And then, thirdly, the place that both these lords have, in this life, in a believer, chap. vii. This, then, is the only reigning sin; and in whomsoever it is in its power and compass, as it is in all unregenerate men, in them, and in them only, doth sin reign, and every sin they commit is with full consent (as was manifested before), in exact willing obedience to the sovereign lord that reigns in them.

4. Observe that the *grace, new creature,* principle, or spiritual life, that is given to, bestowed on, and wrought in, all and only believers, be it in the lowest and most remiss degree that can be imagined, is yet no less universally spread over the whole soul than the contrary habit and principle of lust and sin whereof we have spoken. In the understanding it is *light* in the Lord; in the will, *life;* in the affections, *love,* delight, etc., those being reconciled who were alienated by wicked works. Wherever there is any thing the least of grace, there something of it is in every thing of the soul that is a capable seat for good or evil habits or dispositions. He that is "in Christ is a new creature," 2 Cor. v. 17; not renewed in one or other particular,—"he is a new creature."

5. That wherever true grace is, in what degree soever, there it bears rule, though sin be in the same subject with it. As sin reigns before grace comes, so *grace reigns* when it doth once come. And the reason is, because sin having the first rule and dominion in the heart, abiding there, there is neither room nor place for grace but what is made by conquest; now, whoever enters into a possession by right of conquest, what resistance soever be made, if he prevail to a conquest, he reigns. In every regenerate man, though grace be never so weak, and corruption never so strong, yet properly the sovereignty belongs to grace. Having entered upon the soul and all the powers of it by conquest, so long as it abides there it doth

reign. So that to say a regenerate man may fall into reigning sin, as it is commonly expressed (though, as we have manifested, no sin reigns but the sin of nature, as no good act reigneth but the Spirit and habit of grace), and yet continue regenerate, is all one as to say he may have and not have true grace at the same time.

Now, from these considerations some farther inferences may be made:—(1.) That in every regenerate person there are, in a spiritual sense, two principles of all his actings,—two *wills*. There is the will of the flesh, and there is the will of the Spirit. A regenerate man is spiritually and in Scripture expression two men,—a "new man" and an "old," an "inward man" and a "body of death,"—and hath two wills, having two natures, not as natural faculties, but as moral principles of operation; and this keeps all his actions, as moral, from being perfect, absolute, or complete in any kind. He doth good with his whole heart upon the account of sincerity, but he doth not good with his whole heart upon the account of perfection; and when he doth evil, there is still a non-submitting, an unconsenting principle. This the apostle complains of and declares, Rom. vii. 19–22, "The good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do. Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me. For I delight in the law of God after the inward man." There is an "I" and an "I" at opposition, a willing and not willing, a doing and not doing, a delighting and not delighting, all in the same person. So that there is this difference at the entrance between what sin soever of regenerate persons and others: Though the principle of sinning be the same, for the kind and nature of it, in them and others,—all sin, every man's sins, be who he will, believer or unbeliever, being tempted by his own lust,—yet that lust possesseth the whole soul, and takes in the virtual consent of the whole man, notwithstanding the control and checks of conscience and the light of the judgment, in him that is unregenerate; but in every regenerate person there is an unconsenting principle, which is as truly the man himself, that doth not concur in sin, that doth expressly dissent from it, as the other is from whence it flows.

(2.) That *sin neither can, doth, nor ever shall, reign in regenerate persons*. The reason of this I acquainted you with before; and the apostle thinks this a sufficient proof of this assertion, "Because they are under grace," Rom. vi. 14. Whilst the principle of grace abides in them, which reigns wherever it be, or the free acceptance of God in the gospel is towards them, it is impossible, upon the account of any actual sin whatever whereinto they may fall, that sin should reign in them. Nothing gives sin a reign and dominion but a total defect of all true grace whatever, not only as to the exerting itself, but as to any habitual relics of it. It may be overwhelmed

sometimes with temptations and corruptions, but it is grace still, as the least spark of fire is fire, though it should be covered with never so great a heap of ashes; and it reigns then.

(3.) That *regenerate persons sin not with their whole and full consent.* Consent may be taken two ways:—First, *Morally,* for the approbation of the thing done. So the apostle says, that in the inward man he did "consent to the law that it was good," Rom. vii. 16; that is, he did approve it as such, like it, delight in it as good: and thus a regenerate man never consents to sin, no, nor unregenerate persons neither, unless they are such as, "being past feeling, are given up to work lasciviousness with greediness." A regenerate person is so far from thus consenting to sin, that before it, in it, after it, he utterly condemns, disallows, hates it, as in himself and by himself committed. Secondly, Consent may be taken in a *physical* sense, for the concurrence of the commanding and acting principles of the soul unto its operations. And in this sense an unregenerate man sins with his full consent and his whole will. A regenerate man doth not, cannot do so: for though there is not in that consent to sin which his will, inclined by the remaining disposition of sin in it, doth give, an actual sensible reaction of the other principle, yet there is an express not-consenting; and by the power that it hath in the soul (for habits have power in and over the subjects wherein they are), it preserves it from being wholly engaged into sin. And this is the great intendment of the apostle, Rom. vii. 19–22.

From what hath been spoken will easily appear what answer may be given to the former argument, to wit, that notwithstanding any sins that either the Scripture or the experience of men doth evince that the saints may fall into, yet that they never sin or perpetrate sin with their full and whole consent, whereby they should be looked upon in and under their sins in the same state and condition with unregenerate persons, in whom sin reigneth, committing the same sin. And how insufficient any thing produced by Mr Goodwin in defence of the argument laid down at the entrance of this chapter, is to remove the answer given unto it from believers not sinning with their whole consent, may easily be demonstrated. This he thus proposeth:—

"Some, to maintain this position, that all the sins of true believers are sins of infirmity, lay hold on this shield: 'Such men,' they say, 'never sin with their whole wills, or with full consent; therefore they never sin but through infirmity.' That they never sin with full consent they conceive they prove sufficiently from that of the apostle, 'For the good that I would I do not: but the evil that I would not, that I do. Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me.' I answer, first, That the saints cannot sin but with their whole wills or full consents is undeniably

proved by this consideration,—namely, because otherwise there should be not only a plurality or diversity, but also a contrariety of wills in the same person at one and the same instant of time, namely, when the supposed act of evil is produced. Now, it is an impossibility of the first evidence that there should be a plurality of acts, and these contrary one to the other, in the same subject or agent at one or the same instant of time. It is true, between the first movings of the flesh in a man towards the committing of the sin and the completing of the sin by an actual and external patration of it, there may be successively in him not only a plurality but even a contrariety of volitions or motions of the will, according to what the Scripture speaketh concerning the flesh lusting against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; but when the flesh, having prevailed in the combat, bringeth forth her desire into act, the Spirit ceaseth from his act of lusting: otherwise it would follow that the flesh is greater and stronger in her lusting than the Spirit of God is in his, and that when the flesh lusteth after the perpetration of such or such a sin, the Spirit as to the hindering of it lusteth but in vain; which is contrary to that of the apostle, 'Greater is he that is in you' (speaking, as it is clear, of the Spirit of God unto true believers) 'than he that is in the world,' meaning Satan and all his auxiliaries,—sin, flesh, corruption."

Ans. What we intend by the saints not sinning with their whole wills hath been declared. That there is not a consistency in the explanation we have given Mr Goodwin asserts, because it would infer "a plurality, yea a contrariety of wills in the same person at the same time." That there is a plurality, yea a contrariety of wills, in the Scripture sense of the expression of the will of a man, was before from the Scripture declared; not a plurality of wills in a physical sense, as the will is a natural faculty of the soul, but in a moral and analogical sense, as it is taken for a habit or principle of good or evil. The will is a natural faculty. One nature hath one will. In every regenerate man there are two natures, the new or divine, and the old or corrupted. In the same sense, there are in him two wills, as was declared. But saith he, "It is an impossibility of the first evidence, that there should be a plurality of acts in the same subject at the same time, and these contrary one to another." But,—

1. If you intend acts in a moral consideration, unless you add, "About the same object," which you do not, this assertion is so far from any evidence of truth, that it is ridiculously false. May not the same person love God and hate the devil at the same time? But,—

2. How pass you so suddenly from a plurality of wills to a plurality of acts? By the *will* we intend (in the sense wherein we speak of it) a habit, not any act,—that is, the will as habitually invested with a new principle, and not as actually willing from thence and

by virtue thereof. Arminius, from whom our author borrows this discourse, fell not into this sophistry; he tells you, "There cannot be contrary wills or volitions about the same act." But is it with Mr Goodwin or Arminius an impossibility that there should be a mixed action, partly voluntary and partly involuntary? Actions whose principles are from without, by persuasion, may be; so a man's throwing his goods into the sea to save his own life. Now, the principles whereof we speak, flesh and grace, are internal and contrary; and shall not the actions that proceed from a faculty wherein such contrary principles have their residence be partly voluntary, partly involuntary?

But he tells you, "That though there might be lusting of the Spirit against the flesh before the act of sin, yet when it comes to the acting of it then it ceaseth, and so the act is wrought with the whole will."

1. Though this were so, yet this doth not prove but that the action is mixed, and not absolutely and wholly voluntary. Mixed actions are so esteemed from the antecedent deliberation and dissent, though the will be at length prevailed upon thereunto; and I have showed before that in the very action there is a virtual dissent, because of the opposite principle that is in the will. But,—

2. How doth it appear that the Spirit doth not "lust against the flesh" (though not to a prevalency) even in the exertion of the acts of sin? In every good act that a man doth, because evil is present with him, though the prevalency be on the part of the Spirit and the principle of grace, yet the flesh also with its lustings doth always in part corrupt it; thence are all the spots, stains, and imperfections of the holy things and duties of the saints. And if the flesh in its lusting will immix itself with our good actions to their defilement and impairing, why may not the Spirit in the ill [actions] not only immix itself and its lustings therewith, but bear off from the full influence of the will into them which otherwise it would have?

But saith he, "If the Spirit doth not cease lusting before the flesh bring forth the act of sin, then is the Spirit conquered by the flesh, contrary to that of the apostle, 1 John iv. 4, 'Stronger is he that is in you than he that is in the world.'" But,—

1. If from hence the flesh must be thought and conceived to be stronger than the Spirit, because it prevails in any act unto sin, notwithstanding the contending of the Spirit, how much more must it be judged to prevail over it and to conquer it if it cause it utterly to cease, and not to strive at all! He that restrains another that he shall not oppose him at all hath a greater power than he who conquers him in his resistance. But why doth Mr Goodwin fear lest the flesh should be asserted to be stronger in us than the Spirit? Is not his whole design to prove that it is, or may be, so much stronger and more prevalent than it, that whereas it is confessed on

all hands that the Spirit doth never wholly conquer the flesh, so that it shall not remain in the saints in this life, yet that the flesh doth wholly prevail over the Spirit and conquer it, to an utter expulsion of it out of the hearts of them in whom it is?

2. In the prevalency of the flesh, it is not the Spirit himself that is conquered, but only some *motions* and *actings* of him in the heart. Now, though some particular actings and motions of his may not come out eventually unto success, yet if he generally bear rule in the heart, he is not to be said, even as in us and acting in us, not to be stronger than the flesh. He is, as in us, on this account said to be "stronger than he that is in the world," because, notwithstanding all the opposition that is against us, he preserveth us in our state and condition of acceptation with God, and walking with him with an upright heart, in good works and duties for the most part, though sometimes the flesh prevails unto sin, from which yet he recovers us by repentance.

3. To speak a little to Mr Goodwin's sense. By the Spirit's insufficiency, it is manifest, from the text urged, and from what follows in the same place, that he intends not a spiritual vital principle in the will, having its residence there, with its contrary principle, the flesh (perhaps he will grant no such thing), but the Spirit of God himself. How, now, doth this Spirit lust? Not formally, doubtless, but by causing us so to do. And how doth it do that, in Mr Goodwin's judgment? Merely by persuading of us so to do. So that to have the flesh prevail against the Spirit is nothing, in his sense, but to have sin prevail and the motives of the flesh above the motives used by the Spirit; which may be done, and yet the Spirit continue unquestionably stronger than the flesh.

4. The sum is, If the Spirit and the flesh, lust and grace, may be looked on as habitual qualities and principles in the wills of the same persons, so that though a man hath but one will, yet, by reason of these contrary qualities, he is to be esteemed as having two diverse principles of operation, it is evident that, having contrary inclinations continually, the will hath in its actings a relation to both these principles, so that no sin is committed by such an one with his whole will and full consent. That contrary qualities in a remiss degree may be in the same subject is known "lippis et tonsoribus." These adverse principles, the flesh and Spirit, are as those contrary qualities of the same subject; and the inclinations, yea, and the elicit acts of the will, are of the same nature with them: so that in the same act they may both be working, though not with equal efficacy. Notwithstanding any thing, then, said to the contrary, it appears that in the sins which the saints fall into, they do not sin with their whole wills and full consent; which of itself is a sufficient answer to the foregoing argument.

Sect. 25 contains a discourse too long to be imposed upon the reader by a transcription. There are three parts of it: the first rendering a reason whence it is, that, "if the Spirit be stronger than the flesh, yet the flesh doth often prevail in its lustings." The second, "The way of the Spirit's return, to act in us after its motions have been rejected." The third endeavours a proof of the proposition denied, "That the saints sin with their full and whole consent," by the example of David.

For the first, he tells you, "That the Spirit acts not to the just efficacy of its vigour and strength, but only when his preventing motions are entertained and seconded with a suitable concurrence in the hearts and wills of men; through a deficiency and neglect whereof he is said to be 'grieved' and 'quenched,'—that is, to cease from other actings or movings in men. This truth is the ground of such and such sayings in the epistles of Paul: 'For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die; but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.' 'For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God,'" etc.

Ans. The Spirit here intended by Mr Goodwin is the holy and blessed Spirit of grace. What his actings to the just efficacy of his vigour and strength are, Mr Goodwin doth not explain; nor, indeed, notwithstanding the seeming significancy of that expression, is he able. It must be to act either as much as he can or as much as he will. That the Holy Spirit, in opposing sin, acts to the utmost extent of his omnipotency in any, I suppose will not be affirmed. If it be as much as he will, then the sense is, he will not in such cases act as much as he will. What that signifies we want some other expressive phrase to declare. To let this pass, let us see, in the next place, what his acting to this just efficacy are suspended upon; it is, then, in case "his first preventing motions be received and seconded." But then, secondly, what are these "first preventing motions" of the Spirit? and what is it to entertain them with a suitable concurrence of the will? For the first, Mr Goodwin tells us in this section they are "motions of a cool and soft inspiration." Such cloudy expressions, in a thing of this moment, are we forced to embrace! "Preventing motions of the Spirit" are either internal physical acts, in, with, and upon the wills of men, working in them to will and to do (called "preventing" from the actings of the wills themselves), or they are moral insinuations and persuasions to good, according to the analogy of the doctrine Mr Goodwin hath espoused. It is the latter only that are here intended. The "preventing motions of the Spirit" are his moral persuasions of the will to the good proposed to its consideration.

See, then, in the next place, what it is to "second and entertain these motions with a suitable concurrence in the heart and will."

Now, this must be either to yield obedience to these motions, and do the good persuaded unto, or something else. If any thing else, we desire to know of Mr Goodwin what it is, and wherein it consists. If it be to do the good persuaded to, then what becomes, I pray you, of those "subsequent helps" which are suspended upon this obedience, when the thing itself is already performed which their help and assistance is required unto? They may well be called "subsequent motions" which are never used nor applied but when the things whereunto they move and provoke are beforehand accomplished and performed; yea, they are suspended on that condition.

Farther; wherein do these "subsequent helps," as it is expressed, which move at a more high and glorious rate, consist? We have had it sufficiently argued already, to a thorough conviction of what is Mr Goodwin's judgment in this matter, namely, that he acknowledgeth no operations in or upon the wills of men but what are moral, by the way of persuasion, contending, to the utmost efficacy of his vigour and strength in disputing, that there is an inconsistency between physical, internal operations in or upon the will of men, and moral exhortations or persuasions, as to the production of the same effect. This, then, is the frame of this fine discourse: "If, upon the Spirit's first persuasion to good, men yield obedience and do it accordingly, the Spirit will then with more power and vigour move them when they have done it, and persuade them to do it." That this discourse of his doth readily administer occasion and advantage to retort upon him his third argument, formerly considered, of imposing incoherent and inconsistent reasonings and actings upon God in his dealings with men, the intelligent reader will quickly find out;—and it were an easy thing to erect a theatre, and, upon Mr Goodwin's principles, to personate the Almighty with an incongruous and incoherent discourse; but we fear God.

Thirdly, That the Spirit is grieved with the sins of believers, and their walking unworthily of, or not answerably to, the grace they have received, is clear, Eph. iv. 30: the apostle admonisheth believers to abstain from the sins he there enumerates, and consequently [from] others of the like import, [and] having put on and learned Christ unto sanctification, that they do not grieve the Spirit, from whom they have received that great mercy and privilege of being "sealed to the day of redemption." But that therefore the subsequent and more effectual motions of the Spirit are not free as the first, but suspended on our performance of that which he first moves unto, and so, consequently, that there is neither first nor second motion of the Spirit but may be rendered useless and fruitless, or be for ever perverted, is an argument not unlike that of the Papists, "Peter, feed my sheep; therefore the pope is head of the church."

The ensuing discourse also is not to be passed without a little animadversion. Thus, then, he proceeds: "Believers," saith he, "do then mortify the deeds of the body by the Spirit, when they join their wills unto his in his preventing motions of grace, and so draw and obtain farther strength and assistance from him in order to the great and difficult work of mortification; in respect of which concurrence also with the Spirit, in his first and more gentle applications of himself to them, they are said to be 'led by the Spirit,' as in their comportment with him, in his higher and farther applications, they become filled with the Spirit, according to the expression of the apostle, 'Be ye filled with the Spirit;' that is, 'Follow the Spirit close in his present motions and suggestions within you, and you shall be filled with him;' that is, 'Ye shall find him moving and assisting you upon all occasions at a higher and more glorious rate.'"

Ans. 1. What this "joining of our wills to the will of the Spirit" is was in part manifested before. The "will of the Spirit" is that we be mortified. His motions hereunto are his persuasions that we be so. To join our wills to his, is in our will to answer the will of the Spirit; that is, upon the Spirit's motions, we mortify ourselves. By this also, he tells us, we draw or obtain farther strength or assistance from the Spirit for that work which we have done already. But how so? Why, he tells you afterward that this is the "law of the Spirit." It seems, then, that by doing one thing, we obtain or procure the assistance of the Spirit for another, and that by a law. I ask, By what law? by the law of works? By that law the apostle tells you that we do not at all receive the Spirit; therefore, by a parity of reason, we obtain not any farther supplies from him by that law. By the law of faith or grace? That law knows nothing of such terms as that we should by any acting of ours procure the Holy Spirit of God, which he freely bestows according to the main tenor of that law. Farther; how is this second grace obtained, and what is the law of the Spirit therein? Is it obtained *ex congruo* or *ex condigno?* Produce the rule of God's proceeding with his saints, or any of the sons of men, in the matter of any gracious behovement of his, and you will outdo whatever your predecessors, whether Pelagians, Papists, Arminians, or Socinians, could yet attain unto. Our Lord hath told us that "without him we can do nothing; yea, that all our sufficiency is of God, and without him we cannot think a good thought; that he works in us to will and to do,—not only beginning, but perfecting every good work, fulfilling in us all the good pleasure of his goodness, and the work of faith with power;" ascribing the whole of the great work of salvation to himself and his Holy Spirit, working freely and graciously as he wills and pleaseth. Of this order of his dealing with men, that his first or preventing grace should be free, but his subsequent grace procured by us and bestowed on us according to

our working and co-operation with his first grace, invented by Pelagius, Julianus, and Celestinus, and here introduced anew by Mr Goodwin, he informs us nothing at all. In brief, this whole discourse is the mere Pelagian figment, wrapped up in general, cloudy expressions, with allusions to some Scripture phrases (which profane as well as erring spirits are prone to) concerning the bestowing of the grace of God according to the differing deportments and deservings of men, differencing themselves from others, and, in comparison of them, holding out what they have not received. But,—

2. "To answer the first and gentle motions of the Spirit is to be led by him, and then we shall be filled with the Spirit." But how doth Mr Goodwin prove that to be "led by the Spirit" is to "answer his first gentle motions," and thereby to obtain his farther and more glorious actings and persuasions? Is it safe thus to make bold with the word of God? or is not this to wrest it, as ignorant and unstable men do, unto perdition? Saints being "led by the Spirit of God," and "walking after the Spirit," are, in Rom. viii., expressions of that effectual sanctification, exerting itself in their conversation and walking with God, which the Spirit of God worketh in them, and which it is their duty to come up unto, in opposition to "living or walking after the flesh." If this now be attained, and the saints come up unto it, antecedently to the subsequent grace of the Spirit, what is that subsequent grace which is so gloriously expressed, and wherein doth it consist? Neither doth that expression of "Led by the Spirit" hold out the concurrence or "comportment" of their wills, as it is phrased, with the gentle motion of the Spirit, but the powerful and effectual operation of the Spirit, as to their holiness and walking with God. Πνεύματι Θεοῦ ἄγονται is not, "They comport or concur with the Spirit in his motions;" but, "By the Spirit they are acted and carried out to the things of God." Neither hath this any relation to or coherence with that of the Ephesians, v. 18, "Be filled with the Spirit." Neither is there any such intendment in the expression as is here intimated, of a promise of receiving more of the Spirit, on condition of that compliance, concurrence, and comportance with his motions, as is intimated. That the Spirit is sometimes taken for his graces, sometimes for his gifts *habitually*, sometimes for his *actual operations*, is known. The apostle in that place, dissuading the Ephesians from turning aside to such carnal, sinful refreshments as men of the world went out unto, bids them "not be drunk with wine, wherein is excess," but to be "filled with the Spirit;" to take their refreshment in the joys of the Spirit, "speaking to themselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs," verses 18, 19. Could I once imagine that Mr Goodwin had the least thought that indeed there was any thing in the Scripture looking towards his intendment in the producing of it, I should farther manifest the mis-

take thereof. To play thus with the word of God is a liberty we dare not make use of yet.

3. He concludes, "That the reason why believers are overcome by the lustings of the flesh is, not because the Spirit is not stronger than the flesh, but because men have more will to hearken to the lusts of the flesh than to the Spirit."

"Fortunam Priami cantabo, et nobile bellum."

This is the issue of all the former swelling discourse: "Men's sins are from their own wills, and not because the Spirit is not stronger than the flesh." And who ever doubted it? The conclusion you were to prove is, "That believers sin with their whole will and full consent of their wills, and that the new principle that is in them doth not cause their wills to decline from acting in sin to the just efficacy of all their strength and vigour." But of this οὐδὲ γρῦ. For the insinuation in that expression of the "will hearkening to the lusting of the flesh, and not to the lusting of the Spirit," in a sovereign indifferency to both, and a liberty for the performance of either, in a way exclusive of good or vicious habitual principles of operation in the will itself, I shall not now divert to the consideration of.

What else remains in this section either doth not concern the business in hand, as the fine notion of the Spirit's return to move believers, when his motions have been rejected, with the manner thereof, according to his conception, must be afterward considered apart,—as the fall of David into adultery and murder, if there be need to go forth to the consideration of his examples and instances; and therefore I shall not longer insist upon it. Only, the close of it, consisting of an inference made from some words of Peter Martyr, deserves consideration. "Upon David's sin," saith he, "Peter Martyr makes this observation, That the saints themselves, being once fallen into sin, would always remain in the pollution of it, did not God by his mighty word bring them out of it: which saying of Martyr clearly also implies that the saints many times sin with their whole wills and full consents; because, were any part of their wills bent against the committing of the sin at the time when it is committed, they would questionless return to themselves and repent immediately after, the heat and violence of the lust being over, by reason of the satisfaction that hath been given thereunto."

Ans. The close insinuation in Peter Martyr's words, of the saints sinning with their whole wills, and the logic of Mr Goodwin's inference from them, I believe is very much hidden from the reader. To the theology of it, I say that the saints, παρὰ τὸ πλεῖστον, do immediately return to God by repentance, as Peter did, upon their surprisals into sin; nor have they any rest in a condition of the eclipse of the countenance of God from them, as upon sin it is always, more

or less. Of David's particular case mention may afterward be made. But the proof, "that they sin with their whole wills and full consent, because they would continue in sin did not the Lord relieve and deliver them by his word and grace," is admirable. I would adventure to cast this argument into as many shapes as it is tolerably capable of, had I the least hope to cause it to appear any way argumentative. We deny, then, that believers have any such power habitually residing in them as whereby, without any new supplies of the Spirit or concurrence of actual grace, they can effectually and eventually recover themselves from any sin whatever; which supplies of the Spirit and grace we say, and have proved, are freely promised to them in the covenant of grace. But what will hence follow to the supportment of Mr Goodwin's hypothesis, "That therefore in all their sins, or any of their sins, they sin with the full and whole consent of their wills," I suppose he alone knows.

Sect. 26, he endeavours to take off that of the apostle, Rom. vii. 19–22, from appearing against him in this cause of the saints' sinning with their whole wills and consents, not not-willing the things they do. To this end he tells us, "That when the apostle saith, 'The evil which I would not, that I do,' his meaning is, not that he did that which, at the same time that he did it, he was not willing either in whole or in part to do, but that he sometimes did that, upon a surprisal by temptation or through incogitancy, which he was not habitually willing or disposed in the inward man to do; but this no ways implies but that, at the time when he did the evil he speaks of, he did it with the full and entire consent of his will."

Ans. 1. It is probable the apostle knew his own meaning, and also how to express it, having so good a Teacher to that end and purpose as he had. Now he assures us, in the person of a regenerate man, that as what he would he did not, so what he did he would not, he hated it; and again, he did that which he would not, and therein consented to the law, by his not-willing of that he did, that it was good, verses 15, 16: which, whether it express not a renitency of the will to that which was done in part, and so far as to make the action itself remiss, and not to enwrap the whole consent of the will, he farther declares, verse 17, telling us that there is a perfect, unconsenting "I," or internal principle, in the very doing of evil: "It is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me."

2. The apostle doth not say what he was not *habitually willing* to, but what he was *habitually unwilling* to,—that is, what the bent of his will lay habitually against, having actual inclinations and elicit acts always to the contrary, though sometimes overcome. Neither in his discoursing of it doth he mention at all the surprisal into sin upon incogitancy and inadvertency, but the constant frame and temper of a regenerate man upon the powerful acting and striving

of the principle of lust and sin dwelling in him and remaining with him; which, saith the apostle, doth often carry him out to do those things which are contrary to the principle of the inward man, which habitually condemns and actually not-wills, or rather nills, the things that are so done, even in their doing. And this doth manifest sufficiently, that when he did the evil he speaks of, he did it not with the full and entire consent of his will, as men do in whom there is no such principle opposite to sin and sinning as is in him that is regenerate, there being very much taken off by the habitual principle of grace that is in him, and its constant inclination to the contrary.

But he farther argues, "If we shall affirm that the contrary bent or motion of his will at other times is a sufficient proof that when he did the evil we speak of, he did it not with his whole will or fulness of consent, and so make this doing of evil or committing of sin without fulness of consent, in such a sense, a distinguishing character betwixt men regenerate and unregenerate, we shall bring Herod and Pilate, and probably Judas himself, into the list of men regenerate, with a thousand more whom the Scripture knows not under any such name or relation,—namely, all those whose judgments and consciences stand against the evil of the ways and practices wherein they walk."

And this he proves at large to the end of the section, in the instance of Herod and Pilate proceeding, against their own judgments and consciences, in the killing of John and of our Saviour.

Ans. 1. We do not only assert a contrary bent and inclination in the wills of believers at other times, but also that, in and under the prevalency of indwelling sin, there is in them an "I" that doth it not, and a not-willing it, from a principle, though, by reason of the present prevalency of the other, its actings and stirrings are not so sensibly perceived; so that though they prevail not to the total prevention of the will from exerting the act of sin, yet they prevail to the impairing, weakening, and making remiss its consent thereunto.

2. The residue of this paragraph is intolerably sophistical, confounding the renitency of the inward man, the principle of grace that is in the wills of believers, with the convictions of the judgments and consciences of unregenerate persons, and their striving against sin on that account. The judgments and consciences of wicked men tell them what they ought to do and what they ought not to do, without respect to the principle in their wills that is predominant; but the apostle mentions the actings of the will itself from his own regenerate principle. We wholly deny that any unregenerate man hath any vital principle in his will not-consenting to sin, whatever the dictates of his judgment and conscience may be,

or how effectual soever to prevail unto an abstinence from sin. To discover the differences that are between the contest that is between the wills in unregenerate men, wholly set upon sin on the one hand, and their judgments and consciences, enlightened to an apprehension and approving of better things on the other, and the contest that is between the flesh and Spirit lusting to contrary things in the same will, as it is in regenerate men, is a common-place that I shall not go forth unto. We grant, then, that in unregenerate men there may be, there is, and was in some degree perhaps in Herod and in Pilate, a conviction of conscience and judgment that the things they do are evil; but we say withal, that all this being foreign to their wills, it hinders not but that they sin with the full, uncontrolled consent of their wills, which are at perfect liberty, or rather in perfect bondage, unto sin. That the "Spirit should lust against the flesh, and the flesh against the Spirit," both in the same will (as it appears they do, Gal. v. 19–23, for the fruits that they both bring forth are acts of the will), in any unregenerate man, we deny. And this is that, and not the former, which abates and takes off from the will's consent to sin.

He concludes the whole: "And to the passage of the apostle, mentioned Rom. vii., I answer farther, that when he saith, 'The evil which I would not, that do I,' he doth not speak of what he always and in all cases did, much less of what was possible for him to do, but of what he did ordinarily and frequently, or of what was very incident unto him, through the infirmity of the flesh, namely, through inconsiderateness and anticipation by temptations to do such things which, when he was in a watchful and considerate posture and from under the malignant influence of a temptation, he was altogether averse unto. Now, what a man doth ordinarily is one thing, and what he doth sometimes and in some particular cases, especially what it is possible for him to do, is another. That true believers, whilst such, ordinarily sin not upon worse terms than those mentioned by the apostle concerning his sinning, I easily grant; but it no ways followeth from hence, that therefore they never sin upon other terms, much less that it is impossible that they should sin upon others. And thus we see, all things thoroughly and impartially argued, and debated to and fro, that even true believers themselves, as well as others, may do those works of the flesh which exclude from the kingdom of God, and that in respect thereof they are subject to this exclusion as well as other men."

1. The sum of this part of the reply is, That what Paul speaks is true of the ordinary course of believers, but not of extraordinary surprisals. This seems, I say, to be the tendency of it, though the direct sense of the whole is not so obvious to me. By that expression, "The evil that I would not, that I do," you intend either the expression of "he would not," or "he did." If the latter, then you

say he did not sin ordinarily and frequently, but only upon surprisals; which is freely granted, but it is not at all to your purpose, but rather much against it. If you intend that part of it which holds out his renitency against the evil he did, in the expression of "I would not," then you say it was not ordinary with the apostle to nill the evil that he did, but in case of surprisal to sin: which I believe is not intended; for is it credible that any one should think that, in the ordinary course of a man's walking, there should be no opposition made to sin, [the] falling whereinto men are liable [unto], but upon "surprisals and anticipations by temptation," as it is phrased there should? Nor is it [credible], on the other side, that he intends the thing that he did ordinarily, but [when he] was surprised by temptation then it might be otherwise. But, first, is a saint to be supposed to sin *ordinarily*, to sin *not prevailed on* by temptation? Is not all sin from temptation? Do they sin actually, but upon surprisal of temptation? To impose this upon the apostle, that he should say, "Truly, for the most part, or in my ordinary walking, I do not sin, but withal I will it not; but when I am surprised with temptations then it is otherwise with me, there is no renitency in my will to sin," is doubtless to wrong him. He doth not limit his not-willing of the evil he did to any consideration whatever, but speaks of it generally, as the constant state and condition of things with him.

2. In the beginning of this section, the *nilling of sin* was antecedent to the sin; here it is something that may be allowed in ordinary cases, but not at all in extraordinary. So that these two expositions put together amount to thus much: "Ordinarily the apostle, antecedent to any sinning, before the lusting of the Spirit ceased, did not-will the thing that he did, which was evil; but in case of temptation it was not so;"—that is, antecedently to his acting of that which was evil, he had no opposition in the inward man unto it, nor lusting of the Spirit against it; which how it can be made good against him whose heart is upright and who hates every evil way, I know not.

3. It is confessed that "ordinarily believers sin at no worse a rate than that expressed by the apostle." But what doth that contain? If "would not" be referred to their doing of sins, then you grant that which all this while you have endeavoured to oppose, and are reconciled to your own "contradiction of the first evidence,"—sin cannot, ordinarily or extraordinarily, be committed but by an *act* of the will, and yet ordinarily there is a *dissent* of the will also thereunto. If you adhere to your other former interpretation, that the willing against sin committed is antecedent to the commitment of it, and laid asleep before the perpetration of any sin, then this also is imposed on you, that there are sins whereunto they may be surprised by temptations that, antecedently to the commitment of

them, they do not not-will,—that as to them "the Spirit lusteth not against the flesh;" which is notoriously false, for the flesh lusteth against the Spirit and all the ways of it and all the fruits thereof, and the Spirit lusteth against the flesh with all its ways and fruits.

4. It appears, then, this being the description of a regenerate man which the apostle gives, as to indwelling sin and all the fruits thereof, that it is most ridiculous to exempt his frame, in respect of such sins as he may fall into by surprisals of temptations, from this description of him, and so to frame this distinction to the apostle's general rule, that it holds in cases ordinary, but not in extraordinary, when nothing in the whole context gives the least allowance or countenance to such a limitation.

It appears, then, notwithstanding any thing offered here to the contrary, upon due consideration of it, that believers sin not with their whole wills and full consents at any time, nor under the power of what temptation soever they may fall for a season; and that because of the residence of this principle of a contrary tendency unto sin in their wills, which is always acting, either directly in inclining unto good, or in taking off or making remiss the consent of the will to sin, notwithstanding the prevalency of the principle opposite thereunto by its committing of sin.

And hence have we sufficient light for the weakening of the argument proposed in the beginning of this chapter; for though it is weak in its foundation (as shall be showed), concluding to what the saints may do from what is forbidden them to do, that prohibition being the ordinance of God certainly to preserve them from it, yet taking it for granted that they may fall into the sin intimated, yet seeing they do it not customarily, not maliciously, not with the full and whole consent of their wills, that there is a principle in them still opposing sin, though at any time weakened by sin, the conclusion of that argument concerns them not. I say, then, first, to the major proposition, They who are in a capacity and possibility (that is, a universal possibility, not only in respect of an *internal principle*, but of all *outward prohibiting causes*, as the purpose and promise of God) of perpetrating the works of the flesh (not of bringing forth any fruits of the lusting of the flesh, which are in the best) willingly and ordinarily (with the full and whole consent of their wills (in which sense alone such works of the flesh are absolutely exclusive from the kingdom of heaven), they may possibly fall out of the favour of God and into destruction. This proposition being thus limited, and the terms of it cleared, for to cause it to pass, I absolutely deny the minor, That true believers do or can so sin (that is, so bring forth the works of the flesh) as to leave no room for the continuance of mercy to them, according to the tenor of the covenant of grace.

But now frame the proposition so as the assumption may comprise believers, and we shall quickly know what to judge of it: "Those who are in a capacity or possibility of falling into such sins as deserve rejection from God, or of perpetrating works of the flesh, though they do so overborne by the power of temptation, nilling the things they do, not abiding in their sins, may fall totally and finally from God; but believers may so do." As the matter is thus stated, the assumption may be allowed to pass upon believers, but we absolutely deny the major proposition in the sense wherein it is urged. I shall only add, that when we deny that believers can possibly fall away, it is not an absolute impossibility we intend, nor an impossibility with respect to any principle in them only that in and from itself is not perishable, nor an impossibility in respect of the manner of their acting, but such an one as, principally respecting the outward removing cause of such an actual defection, will infallibly prevent the event of it. And thus is the cloud raised by this fifth argument dispelled and scattered by the light of the very first consideration of the difference in sinning,—that is, between regenerate and unregenerate men; so that it will be an easy thing to remove and take away what afterward is insisted on for the re-enforcement and confirmation of the several propositions of it.

The major proposition he confirms from Gal. v. 21, Eph. v. 5, 6, 1 Cor. vi. 9, 10, all affirming that neither whoremongers, nor adulterers, nor idolaters, nor the like, have any inheritance in the kingdom of God, or can be saved. That the intendment of the apostle is concerning them who live in a course of such sins, who sin with their whole wills and from an evil root, with whose sap they are wholly leavened and tainted throughout, not them who, through the strength of temptation and the surprisals of it, not without the renitency in their wills unto all sin, any sin, the sin wherewith they are overtaken, may possibly fall into any such sin (as did David and Peter), was before declared; and in that sense we grant the proposition.

For the proof of the minor proposition,—which should be, That believers may perpetrate the works of the flesh in the sense intended in the places of Scripture before mentioned,—he insists on two things: first, The direction of those scriptures unto believers; secondly, The experience of the ways of such persons,—that is, of believers. The apostle tells believers that they who commit such and such things, with such and such circumstances in their commitment, cannot be saved; therefore believers may commit those sins in the manner intended! What hath been said before of the use of threatenings and denunciations of judgments on impenitent sinners in respect of believers, will give a sufficient account (if there be need of any) for our denial of this consequence. And for the second, that

the experience of such men's ways and walking evinceth it, it is a plain begging of the thing under debate, and an assuming of that which was proposed to be proved,—a thing unjustly charged by him on his adversaries, as though they should confess that believers might sin to the extent of the lines drawn out in the places of Scripture mentioned and yet not lose their faith, when, because they cannot lose their faith, they deny that they can sin to that compass of excess and riot intimated.

I cannot see, then, to what end and purpose the whole ensuing discourse, from the beginning of this argument to the end of the 21st section, is. It is acknowledged that all those places do concern believers, the intendment of the Holy Ghost in them being to discover to them the nature of the sins specified, and the end of the committing of them in the way intended, and that God purposes to proceed according to the importance of what is threatened to those sins so committed with all that do them; that so they may walk watchfully and carefully, avoiding not only those things themselves, but all the ways and means leading to them (though if any one of them sin any of those sins without the deadly attendants of them mentioned in Scripture, they have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous). But that from thence it may be inferred that believers may, and some do sin, and that God intends, as it is expressed, to destroy them if they so do, when he hath promised they shall never do so, is a very weak and ridiculous argumentation. They are a medium of acquainting them with the desert of sin, the terror of the law to them that are under it, and the riches of grace in their deliverance.

It is true, "unbelievers are," as you say, "in our judgment" (and I wonder what yours is in the case), "in a state of exclusion from the kingdom of God, whether they perpetrate the works of the flesh mentioned or no." Unbelief is, in our judgment, sufficient of itself to exclude any one from the kingdom of God. But yet withal, in our judgment (and we desire to know yours), it is impossible that unbelievers (we mean those who are adults) should not perpetrate the same evils mentioned, or others of the same import, "all the thoughts and imaginations of their hearts being evil, and that continually," and thereupon be farther exposed to the wrath of God, which is revealed against all that do evil. If, therefore, the discovery of a man's desperate condition, that he may be stirred up to labour and strive for a deliverance from it, doth concern him, then these and the like passages do properly and primarily concern unbelievers, whose state, with the issue of it, is particularly described therein. And to say, as our author doth, "that it is a vain thing for the Spirit of God to threaten wrath to men upon the committing of sin, if by unbelief they are exposed antecedently to that wrath,"

is to question the wisdom of Him with whom (whatever become of us poor worms) we cannot contend. He hath told us that all men by nature are children of wrath and unclean, so far as not to be able to enter into the kingdom of heaven unless they be washed and born again; and yet (we hope without the least deficiency in wisdom), hath farther revealed his wrath from heaven against the ensuing ungodliness that is committed by these children of wrath, to be executed in tribulation and anguish against every soul that so doth evil. Not to detain the reader; what hath been said and shall farther be argued concerning the difference that is between believers and unbelievers in their sinning, with that also which hath been spoken of the concernment of believers in these and the like passages of Scripture, sufficiently argues that no such inference as is made for the confirmation of the assumption of the argument under consideration, according to Mr Goodwin's thoughts and apprehensions of it, can possibly be drawn out from them.

Sect. 22 is a pretty pageant, and by the reader's favour I shall show it him once more: "If it be objected, 'That true believers have a promise from God that they shall never lose their faith,' I answer,—First, That this hath oft been said, but never so much as once proved Secondly, Upon examination of those scriptures wherein such promises of God are pretended to reside or to be found, we find no such thing in them. We find, indeed, many promises of their perseverance, but all of them conditional, and such whose performance, in respect of actual and complete perseverance, is suspended upon the diligent and careful use of means by men to persevere. And, lastly, to affirm that true believers can by no commission of sin or sins whatsoever, how frequently soever reiterated, how long continued in soever, ever make shipwreck of their faith, or fall away from the grace and favour of God so as to perish, what is it but to provoke the flesh to an outrageousness in sinning, and to encourage that which remains of the old man in them to bestir itself in all ways of unrighteousness? And, doubtless, the teaching of that doctrine hath been the casting of a snare upon the world, and hath caused many whose feet God had guided into ways of peace to adventure so far into desperateness of sinning, that, through the just judgment of God, their hearts never served them to return."

Ans. 1. The foundation of this whole discourse is a supposal of promises of preserving believers in their faith, upon the ridiculous supposition after mentioned, to be asserted by the doctrine of the saints' perseverance and the defenders of it; which Mr Goodwin knows full well to be far otherwise.

2. It hath sufficiently been proved that believers have a promise, yea, many promises, to be kept by the power of God from all and any such sin, or any such circumstance of sin, or continuance in sin,

as is wholly inconsistent with believing; and that therefore they shall be preserved in believing.

3. Upon our calling the examination of the proofs of this assertion to an account, we have found it to be made up of trivial exceptions and sophistical suppositions, confident beggings and cravings of the things under contest and debate (all the endeavours to prove the promises of perseverance to be conditional having also involved in them an absolute contradiction to the truth and to themselves), no way sufficient to evince that the promises and work of God's grace are suspended upon any conditions in men whatsoever. And,—

4. We say that the intrusion of this vain hypothesis, that believers should continue so under the consideration here intimated by you of sin, when the main of the doctrine contended for consists in a full and plain denial that they can or shall fall under it (according to the import of 1 John iii. 9, immediately to be insisted on), being preserved by the Spirit and grace of him who so writes his law in their hearts that they shall never depart from him, is the great engine you have used in all your attempts against it, being indeed a mere begging of the thing in question.

5. That there is nothing in this doctrine in the least suited to turn aside the saints of God from the holy commandment, but that, on the contrary, it is of an excellent usefulness and effectual influence for the promotion of all manner of godliness in those that are truly saints, howsoever any man may abuse it (as any other discovery of the grace of God), turning it into lasciviousness, hath been declared. What use hath been made of the contrary doctrine in the world we have hitherto had experience *only* in the Pelagians, Papists, Socinians, and Arminians; and with what fruits of it they have abounded the church of God doth partly know. What it is like to bring forth, being now translated into another soil, or rather having won over to it men some time of another profession, is yet somewhat, though not altogether, in abeyance.

Let us, then, with the apostle, having proceeded thus far with Mr Goodwin, that a foundation may be the better laid for the removal of what he farther adds, proceed to consider *the progress of sin*, and to remark from thence the difference that is between regenerate and unregenerate men in their sinning.

The SECOND thing proposed in the apostle's discourse of the rise and progress of sin, is the general way that lust proceedeth in for the bringing of it forth, and that is temptation: "Every man is tempted of his own lust." This is the general way that lust proceeds in for the production of actual sin; it tempts, and he in whom it is is tempted. There is a temptation unto sin only, and a temptation unto sin by sin. The first is no sin in him that is so tempted. Our Saviour was so tempted: "He was tempted of the devil," Matt. iv. 1; "He was in all

points tempted like as we are, yet without sin," Heb. iv. 15. That his temptations were unto sin is apparent from the story of them. But "the prince of this world coming had nothing in him," John xiv. 30,—found nothing in him to answer and close with his temptations; and therefore, though he was tempted, yet was he without sin. Now, though this sort of temptations from Satan is not originally our sins but his, yet there being tinder in our souls that kindles more or less in and upon every injection of his fiery darts, there being something in us to meet many, if not all, of his temptations, they prove, in some measure, in the issue to be ours. Indeed, Satan sometimes ventures upon us in things wherein he hath, doubtless, small hope of any concurrence, and so seems rather to aim at our disquiet than our sins; as in those whom he perplexes with hard and blasphemous thoughts of God,—a thing so contradictory to the very principles, not of grace only, but of that whereby we are men, that it is utterly impossible there should be any assent of the soul thereunto. To think of God as God is to think of him every thing that is good, pure, great, excellent, incomprehensible, in all perfection. Now, at the same time, to have any apprehensions of a direct contradictory importance, the mind of man is not capable. Were it not for the unbelief, causeless fears, and discontentments that in many do ensue upon temptations of this nature,—which are consequents and not effects of it,—Satan might keep this dart in his own forge for any mischief he is like to do with it. The apostle speaks here of temptations *by* sin as well as *unto* sin; and these former are men's sins as well as their temptations. They are temptations, as tending to farther evil; they are sins, as being irregular and devious from the rule. Now, this tempting of lust compriseth two things:—

1. The general *active inclination of the heart* unto sin, though not fixed as unto any particular act or way of sin, the "motus primo primi." Of this you have that testimony of God concerning man in the state of nature, Gen. vi. 5, "Every figment of the thoughts of his heart is only evil every day." The figment or imagination of the thoughts is the very root of them, the general moulding or active preparing of the mind for the exerting of them. So 1 Chron. xxviii. 9, "The LORD understandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts;"—the figments of them, the next disposition of the soul unto them; and chap. xxix. 18, "Keep this for ever in the imagination of the thoughts of their hearts," or keep their hearts in a continual framing posture and condition of such good thoughts. This, I say, is the first way of lust's temptation; it makes a mint of the heart, to frame readily all manner of evil desires and thoughts, that they may, as our Saviour speaks, "proceed out of the heart," Matt. xv. 19. Their actual fixing on any object is their proceeding, antecedent whereunto they are framed and formed in the heart. Lust actually disposeth,

inclines, bends the heart to things suitable to itself, or the corrupt, habitual principle which hath its residence in us.

2. The *actual tumultuating of lust*, and working with all its power and policy, in stirring up, provoking to, and drawing out, thoughts and contrivances of sin, with delight and complacency, in inconceivable variety; the several degrees of its progress herein being afterward described.

In the first of these there is no small difference between regenerate and unregenerate persons, and that in these two things:—

1. In its *universality*. In unregenerate men "every figment of their heart is only evil, and that every day." There is a universality of actings expressed positively, and exclusively to any actings of another kind, "Every figment of their heart is only evil;" and of time, "Every day." Whatever good they seem to do, or do, whatever duties they perform, that in them all which is the proper figment of their heart is only evil. On this account, take any duty they do, any work they perform, and weigh it in the balance, and it will be found, in respect of principles, or circumstances, or aims, to be wholly evil,—that indeed there is nothing in it that is acceptable to God; and their hearts are casting, minting, and coining sin all the day long. With believers it is not so; there is also a good treasure in their hearts, from whence they bring out good things. There is a good root in them, that bears good fruit. Though they are, or may be, overtaken with many sins, yea with great sins, yet lust doth not tempt them, as it doth unregenerate men, with a perpetual, continual, active inclination unto evil, even, some way or other, in all the good they do. The Spirit is in them, and will and doth, in what state soever they are, dispose their hearts to faith, love, meekness, and actuates those graces, at least in the elicit acts of the will; for "a good tree will bring forth good fruit." Never any believer is or was so deserted of God, or did so forsake God, as that "every figment of his heart should be only evil, and that continually." That no one act of sin can possibly expel his habit of grace hath been formerly showed: neither is he ever cast into such a condition but, from the good principle that is in him, there is a panting after God, a longing for his salvation, with more or less efficacy; the spark is warm and glowing, though under ashes.

2. In respect of *power*. Lust tempts in unregenerate men out of an absolute, uncontrollable dominion, and that with a morally irresistible efficacy. All its dominion, as hath been showed, and very much of its strength, is lost in believers. This is the intendment of the apostle's discourse, Rom. vi., concerning the crucifying of sin by the death of Christ. The power, strength, vigour, and efficacy of it, is so far abated, weakened, mortified, that it cannot so effectually impel unto sin as it doth when it is in perfect life and strength.

But you will say, then, "If lust be thus weakened in believers more than in others, how comes it to pass that they do at any time fall into such great and heinous sins as sometimes they do, and have done? Will not this argue them to be even worse than unregenerate persons, seeing they fall into sin upon easier terms, and with less violence of impulse from indwelling sin, than they?"

Ans. 1. The examples of believers falling into great sins are *rare*, and such as by no means are to be accommodated to their state in their ordinary walking with God. It is true, there are examples of such falls recorded in the Scripture, that they might lie as buoys to all generations, to caution men of their danger when the waves of temptation arise; to show what is in man, in the best of men; to keep all the saints of God humble, self-empty, and in a continual dependence on Him in whom are all their springs, from whom are all their supplies: but as they are mostly all Old Testament examples, before grace for grace was given out by Jesus Christ, so they are by no means farther to be urged, nor are, but only to show that it is possible that God can keep alive the root when the tree is cut down to the ground, and cause it to bud again by the scent of the water of his Spirit flowing towards it.

2. That believers fall not into great sins at any time by the *mere strength* of indwelling sin, unless it be in conjunction with some violent outward temptation exceedingly surprising them; either by weakening all ways and means whereby the principle of grace should exert itself, as in the case of Peter; or by sudden heightening of their corruption by some overpowering objects, attended with all circumstances of prevalency, not without God's withholding his special grace in an eminent manner, for ends best known to himself, as in the case of David. Hence it is that, even in such sins, we say they sin out of infirmity; that is, not out of prepense deliberation as to sin, not out of malice, not out of love to or delight in sin, but merely through want of strength, when overborne by the power of temptation.

This Mr Goodwin frames as an objection to himself, in the pursuit of the vindication of the argument under consideration, sect. 23:—

"Others plead, 'That there is no reason to conceive that true believers, though they perpetrate the works of the flesh, should be excluded from the kingdom of heaven upon this account; because when they sin in this kind, they sin out of infirmity, and not out of malice.'"

Ans. I was not to choose what objections Mr Goodwin should answer, nor had the framing of them which he chose to deal withal, and therefore must be contented with them as he is pleased to afford them to us; only, if I may be allowed to speak in this case,—and I know I have the consent of many concerned in it,—I should somewhat otherwise frame this objection or answer, being partly persuaded that

Mr Goodwin did not find it, but framed it himself into the shape wherein it here appears. I say, then, that the saints of God sin out of infirmity only, not maliciously, nor *deditâ operâ*, in cool blood, nor with their whole hearts, but purely upon the account of the weakness of their graces, being overpowered by the strength of temptation; and therefore cannot so perpetrate the works of the flesh and in such a way as must, according to the tenor of the covenant wherein they walk with God, not only deserve rejection and damnation, but also be absolutely and indispensably exclusive of them from the kingdom of God. What Mr Goodwin hath drawn forth to take off in any measure the truth of this assertion shall be considered. He says, then,—

"To say that true believers, or any other men, do perpetrate the works of the flesh out of infirmity involves a contradiction; for to do the works of the flesh implies the dominion of the flesh in the doers of them, which in sins of infirmity hath no place. The apostle clearly intimates the nature of sins of infirmity in that to the Galatians, 'Beloved, if any man be overtaken with a fault' (προλημφθῇ),—'be prevented, or taken at unawares.' When a man's foot is taken in the snare of a temptation, only through a defect of that spiritual watchfulness over himself and his ways which he ought to keep constantly, and so sinneth, contrary to the habitual and standing frame of his heart, this man sinneth out of infirmity; but he that thus sinneth cannot, in Scripture phrase, be said either to walk or to live according to the flesh, or to do the works of the flesh, or to do the lusts or desires of the flesh, because none of these are anywhere ascribed unto or charged upon true believers, but only upon such persons who are enemies unto God and children of wrath."

Ans. This being the substance of all that is spoken to the business in hand, I have transcribed it at large, that with its answer it may at once lie under the reader's view. I say, then,—

1. We give this reason that "believers cannot perpetrate the works of the flesh" in the sense contended about, because they sin out of infirmity; and do not say that they so "perpetrate the works of the flesh out of infirmity." But if by "perpetrating the works of the flesh" you intend only the bringing forth at any time, or under any temptation whatsoever, any fruits of the flesh, such as every sin is, that this may not be done out of infirmity, or that it involves a contradiction to say so, is indeed not to know what you say, to contradict yourself, and to deny that there be any sins of infirmity at all, which that there are you granted in the words foregoing, and describe the nature of it in the words following. They, doubtless, in whom the flesh always lusteth against the Spirit are sometimes led away and enticed by their own lusts, so as to bring forth the fruits of it.

2. If "to do the works of the flesh" imports with you, as indeed in itself it doth, the predominancy and dominion of the flesh in

them that do the works thereof, we wholly deny that believers can so do the works of the flesh; as upon other reasons, so partly because they sin out of infirmity, which sufficiently argues that the flesh hath not the dominion in them, for then they should not through infirmity be captivated to it, but should willingly "yield up their members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin."

3. The description you give of a sin of infirmity, from Gal. vi. 1, is that alone which we acknowledge may befall believers, though it hath sometimes befallen them in greater sins. It is evident from hence that a sin becometh a sin of infirmity, not from the nature of it, but from the manner of men's falling into it. The greatest actual sin may be a sin of infirmity, and the least a sin of presumption. It is possible a believer may be overtaken, or rather surprised, with any sin, so he be overtaken or surprised. A surprisal into sin through the power of temptation, subtlety of Satan, strength of indwelling sin, contrary to the habitual, standing frame of the heart (not always neither through a defect of watchfulness), is all that we grant a believer may be liable to; and so, upon Mr Goodwin's confession, he sins only out of infirmity, such sins being not exclusive of the love and favour of God. And, therefore,—

4. We say that true believers cannot be said to "walk according to the flesh," to "do the works of the flesh," to "do the lusts and desires of the flesh," which the Holy Ghost so cautions them against; which, as Mr Goodwin observes, are "none of them charged upon true believers, but only upon such persons as are enemies of God and children of wrath." So that those expressions hold out to believers only what they ought to avoid, in the use of the means which God graciously affords them, and do not discover any thing of the will of God, that he will suffer them, contrary to his many faithful promises, to fall into them. And so the close of this discourse is contrary to the beginning, Mr Goodwin granting that true believers cannot fall into these sins, but only such as are enemies to God; and yet he hath no way to prove that true believers may cease to be so but because they may fall into these sins, which that they may do he here eminently denies. Wherefore he adds:—

"If by 'sinning out of malice' they mean sinning with deliberation, with plotting and contriving the methods and means of their sinning,—sinning against judgment, against the dictates of conscience (and what they should mean by sinning out of malice but sinning upon such terms as these I understand not),—certain it is that true believers may so sin out of malice, or at least such as were true believers before such sinning; and this our adversaries themselves confess."

Ans. All this falls heavy on the shoulders (as it is supposed) of poor David, and yet we think it evident that God "took not his

Holy Spirit from him," but that his covenant continued with him, "ordered in all things and sure," and that "sin had not dominion over him." The reasons of this persuasion of ours concerning him shall farther be insisted on when we come to the consideration of his case in particular. In the meantime, I confess the dreadful falls of some of the saints of God are rather to be bewailed than aggravated, and the riches of God's grace in their recovery rather to be admired than searched into. Yet we say,—

1. That no one believer whatever in the world, upon any temptation whatever, did fall into any sin of malice; that is, accompanied with any *hatred* of God, or despite of his grace, or whole delight of his will in the sin whereunto he was by temptation for a season captivated. And though they may fall into sin against their judgments and dictates of their consciences,—as every sin whatever that they have, or may have, knowledge of or acquaintance with in their own hearts and ways is,—yet this doth not make them to sin out of malice; for that would leave no distinction between sins of infirmity, whereinto men are surprised by temptation, and of malice, even sins of infirmity being in general and particular directly contrary to the dictates of their enlightened, sanctified judgments and consciences.

2. For "sinning with deliberation, plotting and contriving the methods and means of sinning" (the proof whereof, that so they may do, will lie, as was before observed, on the instance of David), I say, it being the will of God, for ends and purposes known only to his infinite wisdom, to give us, as to his fall, his dark side and his sin to the full, with the temptation wherewith he was at first *surprised*, and afterward violently hurried into, upon carnal reasonings and considerations of the state whereinto he had cast himself, having lost his old Friend and Counsellor, as to any shines of his countenance for a season, not acquainting us at all with the frame, and working, and striving of his spirit in and under that fall, I shall not dare to draw his case into a rule. That what he then did a believer now may do, judging of his frame in doing of it only by what is expressed; that believers may have *morosam cogitationem*, or deliberation upon some sins whereunto they are tempted, upon the strength of indwelling sin, which may possibly so overcome and prevail against the workings of grace for a season as to set the flesh at liberty to make contrivances to fulfil the lusts thereof,—I say, many have granted, and I shall not (for the sake of poor returning souls, whose backslidings God hath promised to heal) deny. But yet, I say, all their actings in this kind are but like the desperate actings of a man in a fever, who may have some kind of contrivance with himself to do mischief (as I have known some myself), and aim at opportunities for the accomplishment of it. All the faculties of their souls being discomposed, and rendered unserviceable to them through their dis-

temper, through the violence of temptation and the tumultuating of lusts, the whole new man may be for a season so shattered, and his parts laid out of the way as to such a due answering one to another that the whole may be serviceable to the work of faith (as a disordered army, wherein is all its fundamental strength, as well as when it is rallied in battalia, is altogether unserviceable until it be reduced to order), that sin may take the opportunity to fill their corrupt heart (as far as it is corrupt) with its pleasure and desirableness, and so to set the thoughts of it on work to contrive means for its accomplishment.[1] Now as, through the goodness of their Father, and supplies of grace, which, through the covenant thereof, they do receive, this distemper seizeth believers but rarely and extraordinarily, so it doth no way prove them to sin with *malice*, or without hatred of and opposition (secret opposition, which may be as secret as some inclinations to sin are,—not known to ourselves) to the things they do in and under that condition.

That which follows in this section being suited to the apprehension of some particular men, though of great name and esteem, according to their worth and desert in the church of God, as Ursin, Paræus, and the rest, about reigning sin, wherein, as I have declared, my thoughts fall not in with them, I shall not need to insist any longer upon it. Paræus, after all his aggravations of the sins of believers, yet adds that they sin not (nor did David) *ex contemptu Dei*, but through a *pre-occupation* or surprisal of sin; which I believe to be the persuasion of far the greatest number of saints in the world, whatever Mr Goodwin is pleased to think or say to the contrary. Nor is their apprehension weakened by Nathan's charging upon David his "despising of the commandment of the LORD" in doing evil, which, as it is virtually done in every sin, and in great sins in an eminent manner, so that it did amount indeed not only to a consequential, but a formal voluntary contempt of God, Mr Goodwin shall never prove. A father often and severely chargeth upon his son a despising of his command, when he hath been carried out to transgress it, when yet he knows his son honoureth and reverenceth him in his heart, and is exceedingly remote from any resolved contempt of him.

The close of all is a concession of the contra-Remonstrants at the Hague conference, "That believers might fall into such sins as that the church, according to the commandment of Christ, must pronounce that they shall no longer abide in her communion, and that they shall have no part in the kingdom of Christ;" which being made an argument for the apostasy of the saints, I shall consider how it is here improved by Mr Goodwin.

[1] Altered from the original, which runs thus, affording no sense. "That sin *taking* the opportunity to fill their corrupt *part*, ... to *continue* means for its accomplishment."—ED.

"Certainly," saith he, "their sense was, that true believers may sin above the rate of those who sin out of infirmity, inasmuch as there is no commandment of Christ that any church of his should eject such persons out of their communion who sin out of infirmity only. So that, by the confession of our adversaries themselves, even true believers may perpetrate such sins which are of a deeper demerit than to be numbered amongst sins of infirmity; yea, such sins for which the church of Christ, according to the commandment of Christ, stands bound to judge them for ever excluded from the kingdom of God, without repentance. From whence it undeniably follows that they may commit such sins whereby their faith in Christ will be totally lost, because there is no condemnation unto those that are by faith in Jesus Christ, whether they repent or not: and therefore they that stand in need of repentance to give them a right and title to the kingdom of God are no sons of God by faith; for were they sons, they would be heirs also, and consequently have right and title to the inheritance. So that to pretend that howsoever the saints may fall into great and grievous sins, yet they shall certainly be renewed again by repentance before they die, though this be an assertion without any bottom on reason or truth, yet doth it no ways oppose, but suppose rather, a possibility of the total defection of faith in true believers."

Ans. 1. That "true believers may sin above the rate of sins of infirmity," because they may so sin as that, according to the appointment of Jesus Christ, they may be cast out of a particular church, is not attempted to be proved. Doth Mr Goodwin think none may be excommunicated but such as have sinned themselves out of the state of grace? That a man may, through infirmity, fall into some such sin as for it to be amoved from a church society (that amotion being an ordinance of Christ for his recovery from that sin), I know not that it can be reasonably questioned. So that our confession, that true believers may so sin as to be righteously cast out of the external, visible society of a particular church, doth no way enforce us to acknowledge that they may sin above the rate of them who are overtaken with or surprised in sin upon the account of their weakness or infirmity.

2. The church of Christ, in rejecting of one from its society, according to the appointment of Jesus Christ, is so far from being obliged to judge any one *for ever excluded* from the kingdom of God, that they do so reject a man that he may *never be excluded* from that kingdom. It is true, he may be *ecclesiastically* and *declaratively* excluded from the visible kingdom of God, and his right and title to the outward administration of the good things thereof; but that such an one is, and must be thought to be, properly and really excluded from his interest in the love of God and grace of the cove-

nant (being still, by the appointment of God and command of Christ, left under the power of an ordinance annexed by him to the administration of that covenant), it doth not follow.

3. The non-restoration of persons cast out of communion by the church to their place in the kingdom of God, but upon repentance, holds proportion with what was spoken before upon exclusion. The repentance intended is such as is necessary for the satisfaction of the church, as to its expressness and being known. Yet we grant withal that all sins whatever without repentance, in that kind and degree that is appointed and accepted of God, are exclusive of the kingdom of God; and we do much wonder that Mr Goodwin to the text, Rom. viii. 1, should add, "Whether they repent or not," which is not only beyond the sense of what went before, but directly contrary to that which follows after, "Who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." Not to repent of sin is doubtless to "walk after the flesh." No one of them who are freed from condemnation in Christ doth good, and sinneth not. The words, we confess, are not the condition, in the intention of God, on which their non-condemnation is suspended; but yet they are a description infallible of them who through grace are made partakers of it. We say, then, that believers may so fall as that being [they may be?] on that account rejected from the communion of the church, so as not to be restored but upon the evidence of their repentance (and we say that repentance is required for all sins, or men cannot be saved, wondering what Mr Goodwin, according to his principles, intends by the addition to the text of Rom. viii. 1, unless it be that no man stands in need of repentance unless he have cast off all faith and interest in God,—a most anti-evangelical assertion), and yet not commit such sins as whereby their faith must needs be wholly lost.

4. There is a twofold right and title to the kingdom of God; a right and title, by the *profession* of a true faith, to the external kingdom of God, in regard of its outward administration; and a right and title to the eternal kingdom of God, by the *possession* of a true faith in Christ. The former, as it is taken for *jus in re*, believers may lose for a season, though they may not in respect of a remote, original, fundamental root, which abides; the latter they never lose nor forfeit. We say, also, that repentance for sin being a thing promised of God for those that come to him in Christ, upon the account of the engagement of his grace for the perseverance of believers, all such fallers into sin shall certainly return to the Lord by repentance, who heals their backslidings; which Mr Goodwin hath not been able to disprove, of whose arguments, and his endeavours to vindicate them from exceptions, this is the chief.

But yet there being two or three things that Mr Goodwin is pleased to add to what went before, as objections against his doc-

trine in general,—though not of this last argument's concernment any more than of any others he makes use of,—because there are in them considerations of good advantage to the truth in hand, I shall a little insist upon them before I proceed with my intended discourse.

The first is, "That the doctrine of the saints' apostasy maimeth or dismembereth the body of Christ, and brings in an uncouth and unseemly interchange of members between Christ and the devil;" which, howsoever slighted by Mr Goodwin, is a plea not of the least importance in the case in hand. The "body of Christ" intended is that which is mystical and spiritual, not that which is political and visible; his body in respect of the real union of every member of it unto him as the head, described by the apostle in its relation unto him, Eph. iv. 15, 16, "It groweth up unto him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: from whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love." So also Col. ii. 19. The body we intend is that whereof Christ is the head, not only in a political sense, as the supreme governor of it, but in a spiritual, according to the analogy of a head natural, from whence life and all influences of it unto the members do flow. Of this body, some are, in their spirits, already consummated and made perfect in heaven; some are as yet pursuing their warfare in all parts of the world, pressing forward to the mark of the high calling set before them. Now, that any member of his body, "bone of the bone, flesh of the flesh of Christ," given him to make up his fulness and mystical perfection, jointed unto him, washed in his blood, and loved by him according to the love and care of a head to its members, should be plucked off to be cast into the fire, and, after it hath so closely and vitally been admitted into the participation of his fulness and increase, being united to him, become a child of the devil, an enemy to him, and sometimes to his fellow-members, so as to hate his head and to be hated of his head (when yet "no man ever yet hated his own flesh"),—this we suppose no way to answer that inexpressibly intense love which the Lord Jesus bears towards his members, and to be exceedingly derogatory to his honour and glory in reference to his dealing with Satan, the great enemy of his kingdom. But to this Mr Goodwin answers:—

First, "For dismembering the body of Christ, is it not the law of Christ himself, in every particular church or body of his, that as any of their members putrefy and discover themselves to be rotten and corrupt, they should be cut off by the spiritual sword of excommunication? and doth not such a dismembering as this rather tend to the honouring and adorning the body of Christ than any ways to maim or deform it? And for such a dismembering of the body of Christ

which the doctrine in hand supposeth to be causable by the members themselves, by the voluntary disfaithing of themselves through sin and wickedness, neither is the permission of this, upon such terms as it is permitted, either unworthy Christ or inconvenient to the body itself." Reply,—

1. That there is no argument will tolerably arise from what is *practicable* and comely in a visible ecclesiastical body of Christ to the mystical spiritual body,—that is, from a particular visible to the catholic church of Christ. As to the matter in hand, this is evident by the light of this single consideration, that in such an ecclesiastical body of Christ there are always, or may be,—and Christ himself, in the rules and laws that he hath given for the government thereof, did suppose that there always would be,—good and bad, true saints and empty professors; whereas in the body whereof we treat there is no soul actually instated but who is actually united to the Head by the inhabitation of the same Spirit. There never was, nor shall be to eternity, any dead member of that body. They are all "living stones," built upon Him who is the "foundation." Now, surely this is an inference attended with darkness to be felt: "Because it may be comely, for those to whom the administration of ordinances in the visible church of Christ is committed, to cut off a dead member from the membership which he holds by his confession of the faith, when he discovers himself not to answer the confession he hath made in his walking and conversation; therefore Christ himself doth cut off, or one way or other lose, any living members of his body mystical, and actually by faith instated in the unity of his body with him." And if it shall be objected "That even living members, and such as are truly so, may yet, for and at a season, be cut off from a visible particular body of Christ," I answer,—(1.) It is true they may be so in respect of their ordinary present right to the enjoyment of ordinances, not in respect of their remote fundamental right; that still abides. (2.) They are so, or may be so, for their amendment, not for their destruction; that separation for a season being an expression of as much love and tenderness to them in Christ as his joining of them to the body was from whence they are so separated. And, (3.) This makes not at all to the impairing of the true completeness of the mystical body of Christ and the perfection of its parts; for as in particular visible bodies of Christ there may be, and are, dead members which have no place in the body, but are as excrescences in the vine, and yet the body is not rendered monstrous by them, so a true member may be removed and the body not be maimed in the least; the member, though perhaps [removed] from any such visible body for a season, and yet [being of] the true spiritual [body, though] sick and pining, continuing a member thereof still. Now, there is nothing of all this that will in any measure agree to the plucking off a member from

the *mystical body* of Christ, whereof alone we speak. If any should be so separated, it must not only be to [the loss of] his present actual enjoyment of union, but to the loss of his Spirit also, and with him of all right and title, plea or claim whatever, to any interest therein. Neither is it possible that it should be a means for the correction and amendment of such an one, it lying in a direct tendency to inevitable destruction; separation from all interest in Christ can look no other way. So that still the uncouthness of such a procedure abideth.

2. The reason that is added, to put some colour and gloss upon this assertion, namely, "That such persons as are affirmed to be so separated from the body of Christ do voluntarily disfaith themselves," as it is called, is not to the purpose in hand; for,—

(1.) The question is about the thing itself, whereunto this answer *de modo* is not satisfactory. It is urged by the argument that it cannot be allowed any way; the answer is, "It is done this way!"

(2.) Were Mr Goodwin desired to explain unto us the manner how believers voluntarily do or may disfaith themselves, I suppose he would meet with no small difficulties in the undertaking. However, this sounds handsomely.

(3.) That they should so disfaith themselves, through sin and wickedness, without being overcome by the temptations of Satan and the power of the enemies with whom they have to do and wrestle, doubtless will not be affirmed, whilst they continue in their right wits; and if they lose them, it will be difficult to manifest how they can voluntarily disfaith themselves. The state wherein they are described to be by Mr Goodwin, and the considerations which for their preservation he allows them, should not, methinks, suffer him to suppose that of their own accord, without provocations or temptations, they will wilfully ruin their own souls. Now, that believers should, by the power of any temptation or opposition whatever, or what affliction soever, arising against them, be prevailed upon to the loss of their faith, and so to their dismembering from Christ, is that which is objected as an unseemly, uncouth thing; which in this answer Mr Goodwin earnestly begs may not be so esteemed, and more he adds not, as yet.

The following discourse, wherein he pursues the business in hand, is so pretty as that I cannot but once more present it to the reader. Saith he: "As in a politic or civil corporation, it is better that the governors should permit the members respectively to go or be at liberty, that so they may follow their business and occupations in the world upon the better terms, though by occasion of this liberty they may behave themselves in sundry kinds very unworthily, than it would be to keep them close prisoners, though hereby the said inconveniences might certainly be prevented. In like manner, it is much better for the body of Christ, and for the respective members of it, that he should

leave them at liberty to obey and serve God, and follow the important affairs of their souls freely and without any physical necessitation, though some do turn this liberty into wantonness, and so into destruction, than it would be to deprive them of this liberty, and to cause and constrain them to any course whatsoever out of necessity, though it is true the committing of much sin and iniquity would be prevented hereby in many. The dismembering of the body of Christ's apostles by the apostasy of Judas was no disparagement either to Christ himself or it."

Ans. The sum of the whole discourse is, That the Lord Jesus Christ hath no way to keep and secure his members to himself, that none of them perish, but by taking away their liberty; which rather than do, it is more to his honour to let them abuse it to their everlasting destruction. And to this end sundry fine supposals are scattered through the whole discourse; as,—1. That the liberty of believers is a liberty to sin, which they may abuse to their own destruction. The apostle is of another mind, Rom. vi. 17–19, "God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness," etc. 2. That there is no real efficacy of grace, that will certainly fulfil in believers the good pleasure of God's goodness, and bring forth the fruits of an abiding holiness, but what must needs deprive them in whom it is of their liberty. And suitably hereunto, 3. That God having, through Christ, made his saints spiritually free from sin unto righteousness, so that, with the utmost liberty that they are capable of as creatures, they shall surely do good, cannot by his Spirit continue them in that condition infallibly without the destruction of their liberty. 4. That the spiritual operation of God in and with the wills of men induceth a necessitation as to their manner of operation, so that they must act on that account as necessary and not as free agents; with such other the like supposals, which are so many gross figments, whereof Mr Goodwin shall be able to prove no one to eternity. For the removal, then, of all the fine words here tendered out of our way, it may suffice to tell their author that He who is made redemption to his saints,—that sets them free from their bondage to sin by his Spirit, which is always accompanied with liberty; and makes them willing, ready, and free to righteousness and holiness in the day of his power towards them; whose effectual grace enlargeth and improves all their faculties in their operations, with the choicest attendancies as to the manner of their working,—can and doth, by, in, and with the perfect exercise of their liberty, keep them to himself in their union and communion with him for ever; that this pretended liberty unto sin is a bondage from which Christ frees his saints; neither is any thing that can be

imagined more derogatory to the glory of his grace than to affirm that he cannot keep those committed to him infallibly to the end, without depriving them of the liberty which they have alone through him. Of physical necessitation enough hath been spoken before. Judas was never a member of the body of Christ, or of Christ, in the acceptation whereof we speak. By the "body of the apostles" is intended only their number, of which Judas (though he was never of that body whereof they were members) was one.

Farther; the wickedness of this apprehension, that Christ should lose any of those who are true and living members of his mystical body, is aggravated upon the account of that state and condition whereinto he parts with them, they being thereby made members of Satan and his kingdom, God and the devil so interchanging children, to the great dishonour and reproach of his name. To this Mr Goodwin replies in the 28th section:—

"For the interchange of members between Christ and Satan, the Scripture presenteth it as a thing possible, yea, as frequent and ordinary. 'Know ye not,' saith the apostle, 'that your bodies are the members of Christ? Shall I then take the members of Christ, and make them the members of an harlot?' In the original it is, Ἆρας οὖν τὰ μέλη τοῦ Χριστοῦ ποιήσω, etc.; that is, 'Taking away the members of Christ, shall I make them,' etc.; meaning that true believers, who only are the members of Christ, disrelate themselves to him, cease to be members of his body, whilst they live in a course of whoredom and adultery, and make themselves members of another far different relation, namely, of those harlots with whom they sinfully converse, and consequently, by such a mediation, of the devil."

Ans. 1. For the sense of that place of the apostle, 1 Cor. vi. 15, as far as it relates to the merit of the cause in hand, I shall have occasion to speak unto it at large hereafter, and so shall not anticipate myself or the reader. For the present, I deny that there is the least mention made of any interchange of members between Christ and the devil, much less of any such thing as "frequent and ordinary." It is true, the apostle says that he that is "joined to an harlot" makes his members the "members of an harlot," and on that consideration and conclusion, with part of the dignity of believers, whose persons are all the members of Christ, persuades them from the sin of fornication; that they may so much as fall into that sin he doth not here intimate. That men, not only in respect of themselves, and their principles of sin, and proneness unto it within, with the prevalency of temptations, but also eventually, notwithstanding any regard or respect to other external prohibiting causes, may fall into all the sins from which they are dehorted, Mr Goodwin hath not proved as yet, nor shall I live to see him do it.

2. For a man to make himself the "member of an harlot" is no

more but to commit fornication; which whether it be Mr Goodwin's judgment or no, that none can fall into or be surprised with but he is *ipso facto* cut off from the body of Christ thereby, I know not. Taking in the consideration of what was spoken before concerning the manner of regenerate persons' sinning, with what shall be farther argued, I must profess I dare not say so. In the meantime, it is punctually denied that believers can fall into or live in a course of whoredom and adultery; and without such a course they cease not, according to Mr Goodwin's sense of these words, to be members of Christ, nor do they otherwise become members of the devil. There is nothing here, then, that intimates such an interchange in the least.

3. For Mr Goodwin's criticism upon the word ἄρας, it is hardly worth taking notice of; for,—

(1.) If by "taking" there be meant "taking away," the sense must be, that they are first taken away from being "members of Christ" (the word expressing a time past in that tendency), and then made "members of an harlot;"—which, first, is not suited to the mind of Mr Goodwin, who endeavours to prove their ceasing to be members of Christ by becoming members of an harlot, the efficient cause of their ceasing to be joined to Christ consisting in their being joined with an harlot; and, secondly, destroys the whole of the apostle's reasoning in the place, from the great unworthiness of such a way or practice as making the members of Christ to be the members of an harlot, because none should so be made but those who had first ceased to be members of Christ. And so his assertion, instead of an effectual persuasive, should upon the matter be entangled in a contradiction to itself. And,—

(2.) As there is nothing in the place to enforce that sense upon the word, so there is nothing in the word to impose that sense upon the place. When our Saviour speaks to his disciples, Luke ix. 3, Μηδὲν αἴρετε εἰς τὴν ὁδόν, he doth not bid them take nothing away for their journey, but "take nothing with them;" and so Mark vi. 8, where his command is that μηδὲν αἴρωσιν εἰς ὁδόν. And in that of Matt. iv. 6, when the devil urged to our Saviour, ἐπὶ χειρῶν ἀροῦσί σε, he did not intimate that the angels should take him away in their hands, but support him from hurt. When Jesus ἦρε τοὺς ὀφθαλμοὺς ἄνω, he did not take away his eyes out of his head and cast them upward, John xi. 41; no more than the angel did his hand when ἦρε τὴν χεῖρα εἰς τὸν οὐρανόν, Rev. x. 5; or the apostles their voice when ἦραν φωνὴν πρὸς τὸν Θεόν, Acts iv. 24. Nor doth Christ command us to take away his yoke in that heavenly word of his, Ἄρατε τὸν ζυγόν μου ἐφ' ὑμᾶς, Matt. xi. 29. So that there is little help left to this sense imposed on the place under consideration from the importance of the word; and so, consequently, not

the least countenance given to that horrible interchange of members between Christ and the devil, which is asserted as a usual and frequent thing.

What he addeth in the close of the section is no less considerable than the beginning of it; for saith he, "If it be no dishonour to Christ to take in such as have been members of the devil, why should it be any disparagement to him to reject such who, by their wicked and abominable ways, render themselves unworthy of such a relation?"

Ans. Believers hold not their relation to Christ upon any worthiness that is in themselves for it, but upon the account merely of grace, according to the tenor of the covenant of mercy. That they may fall into such wicked and abominable ways as shall render them altogether unmeet for that relation, according to the law of it, is that great argument, called *petitio principii*, which Mr Goodwin hath used in this case a hundred times. But the comparison instituted in the first words is admirable. Confessed it is that it is no dishonour to Jesus Christ, yea, that it is his great honour, seeing "he came to destroy the works of the devil, to bind the strong man, to spoil his goods, to destroy him that had the power of death, to deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage, to deliver his people from their sins, washing them in his blood, and to make them a peculiar people unto himself, zealous of good works;"—that it is no dishonour, I say, for him to translate them from the power of Satan into his own kingdom, "making them meet for the inheritance of the saints in light, by redeeming them from their vain conversation," to do according as he intended, and to take his own, given him of his Father, out of the hands of the tyrant which held them under bondage. "Therefore, having undertaken to keep them and preserve them, having so overcome Satan in them, for them, by them, broken the head of the serpent, it is no dishonour for him to lose ground given for his inheritance, with his subjects, members, brethren, children, bone of his bone, and flesh of his flesh, into the hand of the devil again." What fort is so strong as to hold out against such a battery: If it be no honour for Christ to bind Satan and to spoil his goods, then it is no dishonour for him to be bound by Satan and to have his goods spoiled!

Another burden upon the shoulders of Mr Goodwin's doctrine, whereof he labours to deliver it, is the great absurdity of the repetition of regeneration, whereof there is no mention at all in the Scripture, and which yet must be asserted by him, unless he will affirm all that fall away at any time irrecoverably to perish; which howsoever he waives at present, were with much more probability, according to his own principles, to be maintained than what he insisteth on.

"But this repetition of regeneration," saith he, "is not unworthy

God, and for men a blessed and happy accommodation." Whether it be "unworthy God" or no, the Scripture and the nature of the thing will declare. The "accommodation" that it seems to afford unto men, being a plain encouragement to sin at the highest rate imaginable, will perhaps not be found so happy and blessed unto them. With great noise and clamour hath a charge been managed against the doctrine of the saints' perseverance, upon the account of its giving supportment to the thoughts of men in and under the ways of sin. Whether truth and righteousness have been regarded in that charge hath been considered. Doubtless it were a matter of no difficulty clearly to evince that this doctrine of the "repetition of regeneration" is of the very same tendency and import with that which is falsely and injuriously charged upon that of the perseverance of the saints. The worst that a man thinks he can do by any act of sin is but to sin himself quite out of the favour of God, into a state of death and desert of wrath. He can no farther injure his soul than to cast it into the condition of men by nature. Tell this man, now, whom you suppose to be under the temptation to sin, at least to have in him that great fool the flesh, which longs for blessed accommodations to itself, whilst it makes provision to fulfil its lusts, that if he should so do, this is an ordinary thing for men to do, and yet to be renewed again and to have a second regeneration,—do you not encourage him to venture boldly to satisfy his sinful desires, having such a relief against the worst that his thoughts and fears can suggest to him?

But whatever it be, in respect of God or men, yet that so it may be Mr Goodwin proves from Heb. vi. 6, where it is said, that "it is impossible to renew" some "to repentance;" wherefore some may be renewed;—and in Jude 12 men are said to be "twice dead;" therefore they may live twice spiritually. The first proof seems somewhat uncouth. The persons spoken of in that place are in Mr G.'s judgment believers. There is no place of Scripture wherein he more triumphs in his endeavoured confirmation of his thesis. The Holy Ghost says expressly of them that it is "impossible to renew them;" "therefore," says Mr G., "it is possible." What is of emphasis in the argument mentioned ariseth from two things:—1. That they are true believers; of which afterward. 2. That they fall totally away. This, then, is the importance of Mr G.'s plea from this place, "If true believers fall totally away, it is impossible they should be renewed to repentance; therefore, if true believers fall totally away, it is possible they should be renewed to and by repentance." That there is a falling away and a renewing again by repentance of the same persons, we grant. That falling away is partial only which is incident unto true believers, who, when God heals their backslidings, are renewed by repentance. To be renewed by repentance is also taken either for *the renovation of our natures* and our change as

unto state and condition, and so it is the same with regeneration, and not to be repeated; or for *a recovery by repentance* in respect of personal failings, so it is the daily work of our lives. Jude says, some are "twice dead;" that is, utterly so,—an hyperbolical expression, to aggravate their condition. Those to whom the gospel is a "savour of death unto death" may well be said to be "twice dead." Unto the death that they are involved in and are obnoxious to by nature they add a second death, or rather, seal up their souls under the power and misery of the other, by contempt of the means of life and recovery. Therefore, regeneration may be reiterated, "Quod erat demonstrandum."

Much of the section that remains is taken up in declaring, in many words, without the least attempt of proof, that it is agreeable to the honour of God to renew men totally fallen away; that is, when those who have been quickened by him, washed in the blood of his Son, made partakers of the divine nature, embraced in the arms of his love, shall despise all this, "disfaith themselves," reject the Lord and his love, trample on the blood of the covenant, kill their souls by depriving them of spiritual life, proclaim to all the world their dislike of him and his covenant of grace. Yet, though He hath not anywhere revealed that he will permit any one so to do, or that he will accept of them again upon their so doing, Mr Goodwin affirming that for him so to do is agreeable to his holiness and righteousness, it is fit that those who conceive themselves bound to believe whatever he says should think so too. For my part, I am at liberty.

I should not farther pursue this discourse, nor insist on this digression, but that Mr Goodwin hath taken advantage by the mention of regeneration to deliver some rare notions of the nature of it, which deserve a little our farther taking notice of; for which end, doubtless, he published them. To make way, then, for his intendment, he informs us, sect. 29, "That 'regeneration' itself, according to the grammatical and proper signification of the word, imports a reiteration or repetition of some generation or other. It cannot import a repetition of the natural generation of men (the sense of Nicodemus on this point was orthodox, who judged such a thing impossible); therefore it must import a repetition of a spiritual generation, unless we shall say (which I think is the road opinion) that it signifies only the spiritual generation, with a kind of reflection upon and unto the birth natural."

Ans. That the grammatical sense of the word imports "a reiteration of some generation or other," is only *said*. Ἀνά hath other significations in composition besides the intimating of a reiteration of the same thing, either in species or individually the same again. Παλιγγενεσία would seem rather to enforce such an interpretation than ἀναγέννησις, which yet it doth not. It is spoken of that which hath no

birth properly at all, as Philo, De Mundo, Μὴ μόνον φθορὰν τοῦ κόσμου κατηγορεῖν ἀλλὰ καὶ παλιγγενεσίαν ἀναίρειν. Ἀνά of itself is only "through:" Χῶρον ἀν' ὑλήεντα, Hom. Ὀδ. ξ.,—"Through a woody country." Ἀνάστασις, "resurrection," doth not import "again," after another rising before, but a restoration from a lost state. So is παλιγγενεσία used, Matt. xix. 28. To be regenerate is to have a new and another generation, not any one repeated. In the place of John mentioned by Mr Goodwin, there is mention neither of a repetition of a former generation nor directly of a new one; though it be so, it is not there called so. Our Saviour at first says, Ἐὰν μή τις γεννηθῇ ἄνωθεν, "Unless a man be born from above," as the word is elsewhere rendered, and properly signifies, as John iii. 31, xix. 11; Mark xv. 38; James iii. 17; and sometimes "of old" or "former days," as Acts xxvi. 5. Once only it signifies "again," Gal. iv. 9, but there it is joined with πάλιν, which restrains it. And in the exposition afterward of what he intended by that expression, he calls it simply a being "born of water and the Spirit," verse 5, without the least intimation of the repetition of any birth, but only the asserting of a new spiritual one; called a birth, indeed, with allusion to the birth natural, which is the "road opinion," well beaten ever since Christ first trod that path. Besides, the very same thing which is expressed under the name of "regeneration," being a spiritual birth, which a man had not before, is also delivered unto us in such words and terms as manifest no reiteration of any state, condition, or thing to be included therein, as conversion to God, a quickening from death, sanctification by the Spirit, etc.; all which manifest the induction of a new life and form, and not the repetition of another. Hence the ancients called baptism "regeneration," being the initial ordinance of Christianity, and expressive of the new life which in and through Christ we receive; and that from Tit. iii. 5. "Regeneration," then, neither in the import of the word nor in the nature of the thing, doth require a reiteration of any generation, but only the addition of a new one to that which a man hath before, and whereunto this doth allude. The receiving of a new spiritual birth and life is our "regeneration, renovation, resurrection, quickening, implanting into Christ," and the like; so that the foundation of all the ensuing discourse is a mere quagmire, where no firm footing can be obtained.

And of the same nature is that which ensues: "It is," saith he, "the common sense of divines, that the two generations mentioned, the natural and spiritual, are *membra dividentia*, and contradistinguished the one unto the other; and so the apostle Peter, too, seems to state and represent them, as also our Saviour himself, John iii. 6. Now, there can hardly any instance be given where the introducing of one contrary form or quality into the subject is termed a reiteration or repetition of the other. Calefaction, for ex

ample, is never termed a repetition of frigefaction, nor calefaction called a reiteration of frigefaction; nor when a regenerate or mortified man dieth his natural death is he said to reiterate or repeat his spiritual death."

Ans. That in the term "regeneration" two births are implied may be granted; that the same is intimated to be repeated is denied, and not proved at all; and therefore Mr Goodwin says well, that the introducing of a contrary form is not called the reiteration of another. No more is it here. Our new birth is called our "regeneration," or "new generation," in allusion to our natural birth, not as a repetition of it. Neither is the allusion in respect of the contrary qualities wherewith the one and the other are attended, but in respect of the things themselves; in which regard, as they are not the same, so they are not contrary, but diverse. They are both births,—the one natural, the other spiritual. Natural and spiritual, in that sense, are not contrary qualities, but diverse adjuncts. And so are the two births compared, 1 Pet. i. 23, John i. 13; in which last place our regeneration is expressed under the simple term of being "born," with distinction to the natural birth, and not the least intimation of the iteration of any birth or generation subjoined. So also is it, James i. 18. So that hitherto little progress is made by Mr Goodwin towards his intendment, whatever it be. Thus, then, he expresseth it:—

"I rather," saith he, "conceive that 'regeneration,' which the Scripture makes appropriable only unto persons living to years of discretion, who generally in the days of their youth degenerate from the innocency of their childhood and younger years, and corrupt themselves with the principles and ways of the world, relates not to the natural generation as such, I mean as natural, but unto the spiritual estate and condition of men in respect of their natural generation and birth; in and upon which they are, if not simply and absolutely, yet comparatively, innocent, harmless, free from pride and malice, and, in respect of these qualifications, in grace and favour with God, upon the account of the death and sufferings of Christ for them, as we shall afterward prove."

Here you have the sum of the design and the doctrine of regeneration cleared from all those vain and erroneous opinions wherewith it hath so long been clouded! It is the returning of men unto the good state and condition wherein they were born, after they have degenerated into ways of wickedness. We thought it had been the "quickening of them who are by nature dead in trespasses and sins, their being begotten again by the will of God, the bestowing of a new principle of Spirit and life upon them, a translation from death to life, the opening of blind eyes, making them who were darkness to be light in the Lord." It seems we have all this while been in

the dark, and that regeneration indeed is only a returning to that condition from whence we thought it had been a delivery. But let us a little see the demonstration of this new notion of regeneration.

1. He saith, "The Scripture makes it appropriable only to them who come to years of discretion." Sir, your proof; we cannot take your bare word in a thing of this importance. In the place yourself chose to mention as the foundation you laid of the inferences you are now making, our Saviour says it is a being "born of the Spirit;" doth the Scripture make this appropriable only unto men of discretion? Men only of discretion, then, can enter into the kingdom of God; for none not so born of the Spirit shall enter therein, John iii. 5. If none but men of discretion can be born of the Spirit, then infants have no other birth but only that of the flesh, and "that which is born of the flesh is flesh," verse 6, not capable of entering into the kingdom of heaven. Surely you better deserve the title of "Durus pater infantum" than he to whom of old it was given. Perhaps a grosser figment was never framed by *a man of discretion.*

2. It is true, infants are comparatively innocent in respect of *actual transgressions*, but equally nocent and guilty with sinners of discretion in respect of natural state and condition. They are no less obnoxious to that death from whence our regeneration is a delivery, by the bestowing of a new spiritual life, than a sinner of a hundred years old. A return to this condition, it seems, is a regeneration. "Quantum est in rebus inane!"

3. The qualifications of infants not regenerated are merely negative, and that in respect of the acts of sin, not the habitual seed and root of them, for in them dwells no good. That, in respect of these qualifications of innocency that are in them by nature, antecedent to any regeneration (all which are resolved into a natural impotency of perpetrating sin), they are accepted in grace and favour with God, had been another new notion, had not Pelagius and Socinus before you fallen upon it. "Without faith it is impossible to please God," Heb. xi. 6, and "his wrath abideth on them that believe not," John iii. 36. That infants have or may have faith, and not be regenerated, will scarcely be granted by them who believe the Spirit of Christ to cause regeneration where he is bestowed, Tit. iii. 5, and all faith to be the fruit of that Spirit, Gal. v. 22, 23. Farther; for the qualification of infants by nature, how are they brought clean from that which is unclean? Are they not conceived in sin and brought forth in iniquity? or was that David's hard case alone? If they are born of the flesh, and are flesh, if they are unclean, how come they to be in that estate, upon the account of their qualifications, accepted in the love and favour of Him who is "of purer eyes than to behold iniquity?" If this be the doctrine of regeneration that Mr Goodwin preaches, I desire the Lord to bless them that belong

unto him in a deliverance from attending thereunto. Of the effects of the death of Christ in respect of all children I shall not now treat. That they should be saved by Christ, and yet not washed in his blood, not sanctified by his Spirit (which to be is to be regenerate), is another new notion of the new gospel.

The countenance which Mr Goodwin would beg to his doctrine from that of our Saviour to his disciples, "Except ye be converted and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven," reproving their ambition and worldly thoughts, from which they were to be weaned, that they might be fit for that gospel state and employment whereunto he called them, and wherein they were to serve him, does no more advantage him nor the cause he hath undertaken than that other caution of our Saviour to the same persons, to be "wise as serpents and harmless as doves," would do him that should undertake to prove that Christians ought to become pigeons or snakes.

Thus much, then, we have learned of the mind of Mr Goodwin by his digression:—1. That no children are regenerate; 2. That they are all accepted with God, through Christ, upon the account of the good qualifications that are in them; 3. That regeneration is a man's returning to the state wherein he was born. And having taken out this lesson, which we shall never learn by heart whilst we live, we may now proceed.

I shall only add to the main of the business in hand, that so long as a man is a child of God, he cannot, he need not to repeat his regeneration. But that one who hath been the child of God should cease to be the child of God is somewhat strange. How can that be done amongst men, that he should cease to be such a man's son who was his son? Those things that stand in relation upon any thing that is past, and therefore irrevocable, cannot have their beings continued and their relation dissolved. It is impossible but that cause and effect must be related one to another. Such is the relation between father and son; the foundation of it is an act past and irrevocable, and therefore the relation itself is indissoluble. Is it not so with God and his children? When they once stand in that relation, it cannot be dissolved. But of these things hitherto.

To proceed with that place of Scripture which I laid as the foundation of this discourse: The general way of lust's dealing with the soul in the bringing forth of sin, whereof there are two acts, expressed James i. 14, the one of drawing away, the other enticing, is to be insisted on. Upon the first, the person tempted is ἐξελκόμενος, "drawn off," or "drawn away;" and upon the second, he is δελεαζόμενος, "enticed," or "entangled."

The first stirring of sin is to *draw away* the soul from what it ought to be fixed upon, by its rising up irregularly to some delightful object.

For a man to be "drawn away" by his lust, is to have his lust drawn out to some object suited to it, wherein it delighteth. Now, this *drawing away* denoteth two things:—

1. The turning of the soul from the actual rectitude of its frame towards God. Though the soul cannot always be in actual exercise of grace towards God, yet it ought always to be in an immediate readiness to any spiritual duty, upon the account whereof, when occasion is administered, it doth as naturally go forth to God as a vessel full of water floweth forth when vent is given unto it. Hence we are commanded "always to pray." Our Saviour giveth a parable to instruct his disciples that they ought to pray πάντοτε, Luke xviii. 1; and we are commanded to pray ἀδιαλείπτως, "without ceasing" or "intermission," 1 Thess. v. 17; which the same apostle in another place calleth praying ἐν παντὶ τόπῳ, "in every place," namely, as occasion is administered. It is not the perpetual exercise of this duty (as the Jews, some of them, have ridiculously interpreted the first psalm, of "reading the law day and night"), which would shut out and cut off all other duties, not only of men's callings and employments as to this life, but all other duties of the ways and worship of God whatever; but it is only the readiness and promptitude of the heart in its constant frame to that necessary duty, that is required. Now, he who is ἐξελκόμενος by lust is drawn off from this frame; that is, he is interrupted in it by his lust diverting unto some sinful object. And as to this particular, there is a great difference betwixt the sinning of believers, and those who arise not beyond that height which the power of conviction beareth them oftentimes up unto; for the main of a true believer's watching, in his whole life, and in the course of his walking with God, is directed against this off-drawing from that habitual frame of his heart by lust and sin. His great business is, as the apostle telleth us, to "take the whole armour of God to him," that sin, if it be possible, may make no approach to his soul, Eph. vi. 13. It is to keep up his spirits to a "hate of every evil way, and to delight in God continually." And because they cannot attain in this life unto perfection, they cry out of the power of sin leading them captive to the law thereof. They would have their wills dead to sin, wholly dead, and have trouble that they are not so as to the general frame of their spirits, how oft soever they be drawn off. For other persons, they have truly no such frame at all, whatever they may be cut into the likeness of by the sharpness of scriptural convictions that come upon them; and therefore they watch not as to the keeping of it. The deeper you dive into them, the more near you come to their hearts, the worse they are; their very inward part is wickedness. I speak now of the ordinary frame of the one and other.

This drawing off by sin in believers is by the power of sin, in op-

position to their will. Their wills lie against it to the utmost; they "would not," as was showed, be so drawn off. But as for the others, as hath been shown, however their minds may be enlightened, and their consciences awakened, and their affections corrected and restrained, their wills are wholly dead in sin.

2. When a man is ἐξελκόμενος, or drawn away, there are stricken out between the lust and the pleasing object some glances of the heart, with thoughts of sin. When lust hath gone thus far, if a violent temptation fall in, the person to whom it doth so befall may be carried, or rather hurried out and surprised, into no small advance towards the perpetration of sin, without the least delight in the sin or consent of the will unto it, if he be a godly man. So was it in the case of David, in the cutting off the lap of the garment of Saul. Lust stirred in him, drew him off from his frame of dependence on God, and by the advantage of Saul's presence stirred up thoughts of self-security and advantage in him, which carried him almost to the very act of sin before he recovered himself. Then, I say, is a man "drawn away," not only in respect to the term from whence, but also of that whereunto, when the thoughts of the object presented as suitable to lust are cast in, though immediately rejected. This I intend by this acting of lust; which although it be our sin, as having its rise and spring in us, and is continually to be lamented, yet, when it is not accompanied with any delight of the heart or consent of the will, but the thought of it is like a piece of fiery iron cast into water, which maketh a sudden commotion and noise, but yet is suddenly quenched, it is that which regenerate men are and may be subject to, which also keepeth them humble all their days. There is more in this drawing away than a single thought or apprehension of evil amounts to (which may be without the least sin: "To know evil is not evil"), but yet it is short of the soul's consent unto it.

The second way wherein lust proceedeth in tempting is by *enticing* the soul; and he who is so dealt withal by it is said to be δελεαζόμενος,—"to be enticed." There is something more in this than in being only drawn away. The word here used is twice mentioned in the Second Epistle of Peter, chap. ii. Once it is rendered to "beguile," δελεάζοντες ψυχὰς ἀστηρίκτους, verse 14; and in the other "alluring," verse 18. It cometh (as is commonly known) from δέλεαρ, a "bait;" which is from δόλεαρ or δόλος, "deceit," because the end of a bait is to deceive, and to catch by deceiving. Thence δελεάζω is to "entice, to allure, to entangle," as men do fishes and birds with baits. That which by this expression the Holy Ghost intendeth is the prevalency of lust in drawing the soul unto that which is by the casuists termed *delectatio morosa*, "a secret delight" in the evil, abiding some space upon it, so that it would do that which it is tempted and enticed unto were it not forbidden; as the fish liketh

the bait well enough, but is afraid of the hook. The soul for a season is captived to like the sin, and so is under the power of it, but is afraid of the guilt. It sticketh only at this, "How shall it do this great thing, and sin against the Lord?" Now, though the mind never frame any intention of fulfilling the evil wherewith the soul is thus entangled, or of committing that sin whereunto it is allured and enticed, yet the affections having been cast into the mould of sin for a season, and conformed unto it by delight (which is the conformity of the affections to the thing delighted in), this is a high degree of sin; and that because it is directly contrary to that "death unto sin," and the "crucifying of the flesh and the lusts thereof," which we are continually called unto. It is, in a sense, a making "provision for the flesh to fulfil the lusts thereof." Provision is made, though the flesh be not suffered to feed thereon, but only delight itself with beholding of it.

I shall not deny but this also may befall a true believer, it being chiefly implied in Rom. vii., but yet with a wide difference from the condition of other persons, in their being under the power of the deceits and beguilements of sin; for,—

1. This neither doth nor can grow to be the habitual frame of their hearts; because, as the apostle telleth us, "they are dead to sin, and cannot live any longer therein," Rom. vi. 2, and "their old man is crucified with Christ, that the body of sin might be destroyed," verse 6. Now, though a man should abstain from all actual sins or open committing of sin all his days, yet if he have any habitual delight in sin, and defileth his soul with delightful contemplations of sin, he liveth to sin and not to God; which a believer cannot do, for "he is not under the law, but under grace." To abide in this state is to "wear the garment spotted with the flesh." But now, take another person: however heightened and wrought up by convictions, unless it be when conscience is stirred up, and some affrightment is put upon him, he can, as his leisure affords, give his heart the swing in inordinate affections, or what else pleaseth and suiteth his state, condition, temper, and the like.

2. A believer is exceedingly troubled upon the account of his being at any time led captive to the power of sin in this kind; and the review of the frame of his spirit, wherein his affections were by delight conformed to any sin, is a matter of sore trouble and deep humiliation to him. I am of Austin's mind, De Nup. et Concupis., cap. viii., that it is this perpetrating of sin, and not the actual committing of it, which the apostle complaineth of, Rom. vii. Two things persuade me hereunto:—First, That it is the ordinary course and walking of a regenerate man that Paul describeth in that place, and not his extraordinary falls and failings under great and extraordinary temptations. This is evident from the whole manner of his

discourse, and scope of the place. Now, ordinarily, through the grace of God, the saints do not do outwardly and practically the things they would not,—that is, commit sin actually as to the outward act; but they are ordinarily only swayed to this entanglement by the baits of sin. Secondly, It is the sole work of indwelling sin that the apostle there describeth, as it is in itself, and not as it is advantaged by other temptations, in which it carrieth not believers out to actual sins, as to such accomplishment of them, which is their state in respect of great temptations only. It is, then, I say, the great burden of their souls that they have been in their affections at any time dealing with the baits of sin, which causeth them to cry out for help, and filleth them with a perpetual self-abhorrency and condemnation.

3. In such surprisals of sin, although the affections may be ensnared, and the judgment and conscience by their tumultuating dethroned for a season, yet the will still maketh head against sin in believers, and crieth out that, whether it will or no, it is captived and violently overborne, calling for relief like a man surprised by an enemy. There is an active renitency in the will against sin, whose bait is exposed to the soul, and wherewith it is enticed, allured, or entangled; when of all the faculties of the soul, if any thing be done in any act of sin in unregenerate men, the will is the ringleader. Conscience may grumble, and judgment may plead, but the will runneth headlong to it.

And thus far have I (by way of digression) proceeded in the difference there is betwixt regenerate and unregenerate men, as to the root and foundation of sin, as also to their ordinary walking. What is farther added by the apostle in the two following degrees, in the place mentioned, because thence also may some light be obtained to the business in hand, shall be briefly insisted on.

The next thing in the progress of sin is lust's *conceiving*. When it hath turned off the heart from its communion with God or consideration of its duty, and entangled or hampered the affections in delight with the sinful object proposed, prevailing with the soul to dwell with some complacency upon the thoughts of sin, it then falleth to "conceiving;" that is, it warms, foments, cherisheth thoughts and desires of the sin entertained, until it so far prevails upon the will (in them in whose wills there is an opposition unto it), that, being wearied out with the solicitations of the flesh, it giveth over its power, as to its actual predominant exercise, and sensibly dissenteth not from the sin whereunto it is tempted. That this may sometimes befall a regenerate person I have granted before, and what is the difference herein betwixt them and unregenerate persons may be collected from what hath been already delivered.

Of the next step of sin, which is its *bringing forth*, or the actual

accomplishment of the sin so conceived, as above expressed, there is the same reason. Τίκτει, "it bringeth out" of its womb the child of sin which it had conceived. It is the actual perpetration of sin formerly consented unto that is expressed under this metaphor. I have little to add upon this head to what was formerly spoken; for,—

1. As they are not the sins of daily infirmity that are here intended, in the place of the apostle under consideration, but such as lie in an immediate tendency unto death, as to their eminent guilt; as also being the fruit of the heart's conception of sin, by fomenting and warming thoughts of sin with delight, until consent unto it be prevalent in the soul: so falls of this nature in the saints are extraordinary, and always attended with their loss of peace, the weakening of their faith, wounding of their souls, and obnoxiousness, without repentance, unto death. God, indeed, hath provided better things for them; but for themselves, they have done their endeavour to destroy their own souls.

2. That God never suffereth his saints to fall thus, but it is for the accomplishment of some very glorious end of his, in their afflictions, trials, patience, humiliation; which he will bring about. These ends of God are many and various. I shall not enter into a particular discourse concerning them.

3. That an impenitent continuance in and under the guilt of such a sin is a sore sign of a heart that neither hath nor ever had any true faith. In others, there is a truth in that of Austin, who affirmed that "he dared say that it might be good for some to have fallen into some eminent particular sin, for their humiliation and caution all their days."

4. That this frequent conception of sin and bringing of it forth, in persons who have been heightened by conviction to a great regularity of walking and conversation, is the means whereby they do go forth unto that which is mentioned in the last place, which is *finishing of sin;* that is, so to be brought under the power of it as to complete the whole work of sin. Now, men bring it forth by the temptations and upon the surprisals forementioned; but they that come to finish it, or do the whole work of it, in them it will bring forth death. This I take to be the intendment of that expression, Ἁμαρτία ἀποτελεσθεῖσα, "Sin perfected." The word ἀποτελεῖν is nowhere used in the New Testament; τελεῖν and ἐπιτελεῖν are. There is τὸν νόμον τελεῖν, which is, not to do any one act which the law requireth, but to walk studiously and constantly according to the rule thereof; and so ἐπιτελεῖν, as the apostle useth it, Phil. i. 6, where we translate it, as here, ἀποτελεῖν. To "perfect the good work," is to walk in the way of grace and the gospel unto the end: so to "perfect sin" is to fulfil the work of sin and to walk in the way of sin, to be under the dominion and reign of sin so far as to be carried out in a course

of sinning. And this is that alone which we exempt believers from; which that they are exempted from, unto all that hath formerly been spoken, I shall add the consideration of one place of Scripture, being turned aside from my thoughts of handling this at large as 'the second part of the doctrine of the saints' perseverance, the former being grown under my hands beyond expectation.

Now, this place is 1 John iii. 9, "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God;"—a place of Scripture that always hath amazed the adversaries of the doctrine which hitherto, through the grace of God, we have asserted, being in itself fully sufficient to captivate every understanding unto the obedience of its truth that is not resolved to cleave to a contrary conclusion, let what demonstration soever lie against it. In the defence of the doctrine under consideration, should we use expressions of the same importance with those here used by the apostle, as we should abundantly satisfy ourselves that we had delivered our mind and sense to the understanding of any indifferent person with whom we might have to do, so we should by no means avoid all those imputations of folly and error that our doctrine suffereth under from the men that have entertained an enmity against it, as it is held forth in equivalent expressions by us. The authority of the Holy Ghost hath gained thus much upon our adversaries, that when he asserteth in express and expressive terms the very thing or things that in us are called "folly," evasions should be studied, and pains taken to rack his words to a sense which they will not bear, rather than plainly to deny his authority. But let the words, with the scope and tendency, be considered. The scope and intendment of the apostle in the place is, to give a discriminating character of the children of God and the children of the devil. Thus he fully expresseth himself unto us, verse 10: "In this," saith he, "the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil: whosoever doth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother;" and withal, to press on an exhortation against sin, whereunto he useth the argument that lieth in the following words, "If any one sin that thinketh himself to be born of God, he deceiveth himself:" verses 7, 8, "Little children, let no man deceive you: he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous. He that committeth sin is of the devil." But how proveth he this? In these words, "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin,—doth not, cannot sin." Such is the genius and nature of the children of God, of them that are born of him, that they do not, they cannot sin. You are persuaded that you are so born of God; therefore you must press after such a frame, such an *ingenie* and disposition, such a principle,

as that thereby you cannot sin. It must manifest itself to be in you, if you be the children of God.

Now, whereas it is offered by Mr Goodwin, chap. x. sect. 27, p. 194, "That the context or scope of the whole place doth not invite such an exposition as is usually insisted on, because" (saith he) "the intent and drift of the apostle, from verse 3 even to the end of the chapter (as he that doth but run the context over may read), is not to show or argue whether the sons of God may possibly in time so degenerate as to live sinfully and die impenitently; but to evince this, that those who claim the great honour and privilege of being the children of God cannot justify or make good this claim, neither unto others nor unto themselves, but by a holy and Christian life and conversation. Now, it is one thing to argue and prove who are the sons of God at present; another, whether they who are such at present must of necessity always so continue. The former is the apostle's theme in the context; the latter he is wholly silent of."

I say, It is evident that the scope of the place is to evince that in the children of God, those that are born of him, there is such a principle, genius, new nature, as that upon the account thereof they cannot sin; and therefore, that those who have not such principles in them, whatever their pretences be, are not indeed born of God;—and in this he manifesteth that those who are indeed born of God cannot possibly so degenerate as to fall into total impenitency; so as to become children of the devil, which he emphatically affirmeth.

He doth, indeed, declare that none can make good their title to be children of God, but those who can justify their claim by a holy and Christian conversation; but yet, moreover, he maketh good the assertion by this farther discovery which he maketh of their new nature to be such as that they cannot sin, or degenerate into a condition of lying under the power of a vain conversation. So that though his intent should not be primarily to manifest that those who are at present the children of God cannot apostatize, but must so continue, yet it is to confirm their nature and genius to be such, with the principles which from God they have received, that so it shall be with them, so they shall abide; and to this he is not silent, but eminently expressive.

The context being thus clear, the words themselves are a proposition or thesis, and a reason for the confirmation of the truth of that proposition. The proposition is ready at hand in the words, "He that is born of God doth not, cannot commit sin." The reason of the proposition confirming the truth thereof is twofold:—1. Because he is born of God; 2. Because His seed, whereof he is so born, remaineth.

The proposition is universal: Πᾶς ὁ γεγεννημένος ἐκ τοῦ Θεοῦ, "Every one that is born of God;" whence these two things ensue:—1. The

truth of it hath a *necessary* cause or causes. Universal propositions must have so, or they are not true. If that which is their ground may be otherwise, it invalidates their certainty. Such, then, must be the cause of this assertion of the apostle. 2. That it compriseth all and every one that is interested in that which is the cause of the certainty of this *universal* assertion or proposition; "every one who is born of God," that hath this seed, be he young or old, weak or strong, wise or foolish, exercised in the ways of God or newly entered into them, all is one. Whosoever is thus interested in the foundation is equally interested in the inference.

In the proposition itself may be considered the subject, and what is affirmed of it. The subject is, "Every one that is born of God." That which is affirmed of it is, "Sinneth not, cannot sin."

1. For the first, namely, the *subject*, they are those which are "born of God;" and who they are that are so born of God the Scripture is clear in, neither is there any difference of importance as to the intendment of this expression. Those who suppose that believers of some eminency only are denoted in it, do not consider that all believers whatever are sharers in the grace intended therein. They are all said to be born not of the will of the flesh, but of God, John i. 13; for it is ascribed to all believers on the name of Christ, verse 12. He begetteth them all of his own will, James i. 18; as also, 1 Pet. i. 23. He is said to beget them, as to quicken them, Eph. ii. 1; and they to be born of him, as they are quickened or raised from the dead. Two things are intimated in this expression: —(1.) A *new principle*, habit, or spiritual life, which such persons have; hence they are said to be "born." As they who are born in the world are partakers of a vital principle, that is the foundation of all their actions, so have they here a new life, a new vital principle. By their being born are they made partakers of it. (2.) The *divine original of that principle of life is from God.* They have the principle of life immediately from him; and therefore are said to be "born of God." And both these considerations are here used as descriptions of the subject; and in the close of the reason of the proposition, they are insisted on as the cause of that effect of not sinning: "He sinneth not, because he is born of God." Both the nature of the principle itself, which in itself is abiding, and the rise or original that it hath from God, have an influence into that causality that is ascribed to it; but about this there can be no great contest.

2. That which is *affirmed* of every such person is, that he "doth not commit sin." That this expression is to be attended with its restrictions and limitations is evident from that contrariety wherein, in its whole latitude, it standeth to sundry other testimonies in the book of God, yea, in this very epistle. "There is no man that doeth good,

and sinneth not," saith Solomon, 1 Kings viii. 46; and, "In many things we offend all," saith James, in chap. iii. 2. And this apostle putteth all out of question by convincing the best of saints that have "communion with the Father and with his Son," that by saying we have no sin, by a denial of it, we involve ourselves in the guilt of it: "'If we,' we apostles, we who have fellowship with the Father and the Son, 'say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves,'" 1 John i. 8. "Doth not commit sin," then, cannot be taken absolutely for Doth not sin at all. There is a synecdoche in the words, and they must be restrained to some kind of sin, or to some manner or degree in or of sinning. Some say, "'He doth not, cannot sin,' is, They do not commit sin with delight, not deliberately and with their full and whole will, without reluctancy and opposition in their wills unto sin" (which reluctancy is at a vast distance from the reluctancy that is raised in wicked men from the convictions of their conscience and judgment); which sense is canvassed by Mr Goodwin to no advantage at all, sect. 25, for, in the way and manner formerly explained, this may well take place. "Doth not commit sin," then, is, Doth not so commit sin as that sin should reign in him spoken of, and prevail with him to death. There is an emphasis and intension in the words, "Doth not commit sin,"—that is, Doth not so commit it as to be given up to the power of it; he doth not commit sin in such a way as to be separated from communion with God thereby, which is only done when sin taketh the rule or reign in any person.

"This exposition," Mr Goodwin saith, "if it can be made to stand upright, will bear the weight of the whole cause depending alone; but as it is, it argueth weakness to determine for our own sense in a controversy or question, without giving a very substantial reason for the exposition." I doubt if Mr Goodwin's discourses in this treatise were to be tried by this rule, a man might, upon very substantial grounds and reasons, call many of his assertions into controversy. And because he addeth, that "such is his hard hap, he can meet with no reasons at all," I must needs question whether he made any diligent search or no; to this purpose I shall supply him with one or two that lie hard at hand.

This, then, to be the intendment of the words is evident,—

1. From the scope of the place and aim of the apostle therein; this is, to distinguish, as was said, betwixt the children of God and of the devil. The children of the devil commit sin: Verse 8, "He that committeth sin is of the devil," as he giveth an instance of one that did so sin. Verse 12, "Cain," saith he, "was of the devil; he was of that wicked one, and he committed sin." How did Cain commit sin? Impenitently, to death; that is the committing of sin which is ascribed to them that are of the devil, of the wicked one. "Now," saith he, "whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin;"

that is, he doth not so commit sin as the children of the devil, that wicked one, do; he sins not to death, with impenitency.

2. The same apostle doth most eminently clear his own intendment in this expression, chap. v. 17, 18, of this epistle, "All unrighteousness is sin: and there is a sin not unto death. We know that whosoever is born of God sinneth not; but he that is begotten of God keepeth himself, and that wicked one toucheth him not." That expression, verse 18, "Sinneth not," standeth in opposition to the sin mentioned, verse 16, "Sin unto death." "'There is a sin unto death;' but 'he that is born of God sinneth not' unto death." So that both the context and the exposition of the words given in a parallel place afford us the sense insisted on.

Three reasons are attempted by Mr Goodwin against this exposition; "and many more," saith he, "are at hand," which it seems he is willing to spare for another season. Of those that he is pleased to use, I have already considered that which is of the chiefest importance, being taken from the scope of the place. It hath been already declared, not only that the sense by him urged is not suitable to the intendment of the Holy Ghost, and that Mr Goodwin is not a little mistaken in his analysis of the chapter, but that the exposition insisted on by us is from thence enforced.

His other reasons are:—first, "That the grammar or letter of the phrase breatheth not the least air of such a sense."

Ans. That the expression is synecdochical was before affirmed; what it importeth under the power of that figure is the grammatical sense of the words. To the grammatical regularity and signification of them doth their figurativeness belong. Let the words be restrained, as the figure requireth, and the sense is most proper, as was signified.

But secondly, saith he, "The phrase of 'committing sin' is nowhere in the Scripture found in such a sense as to sin with final impenitency, or to sin to death."

Ans. The contrary hath been demonstrated. The same phrase necessarily importeth no less, verse 8 of this chapter; and an equivalent expression, beyond all contradiction, intendeth the same, chap. v. 17, 18. Besides, a phrase may be so circumstantiated as to be in one only place restrained to a sense which it doth not elsewhere necessarily import. So that, notwithstanding these exceptions, the exposition of the words is clear as before given in. And yet this is all Mr Goodwin produceth as his ground and foundation whereon to stand in denying this proposition, "He that is born of God sinneth not;"—that is, falleth not under the power of reigning sin, sinneth not to death, as the children of the wicked one do: which I shall leave under that consideration wherewith it is educed from the scope of the text, and the parallel place of chap. v. 17, 18. The truth is, there is not much need to contend about this expression, Mr. Goodwin grant-

ing that the intendment of it is, "That such as are born of God do not walk ordinarily and customarily in any ways of known sin," sect. 28; "which," as he saith, "is the import of that phrase, ποιεῖν ἁμαρτίαν" (the contrary whereof might yet be easily evinced),—"he maketh no trade or occupation of sinning; that is, he doth not sin in an inconsistency of communion with God in the covenant of his grace." Now, in this sense he granteth his proposition, "He that is born of God sinneth not,"—that is, ordinarily or customarily; that is, so as not to be accepted of God; that is, no believer sinneth at such a rate as not to be accepted with God. Add now hereunto the ground and reason of this assertion, namely, his being born of God, and the abiding of the seed in him, and we have obtained all that we desire to evince from this place. Because such an one is born of God (which is a reason which holdeth good to eternity, being an act irrevocably past), and because the seed abideth in him, he cannot sin ordinarily or customarily; which kind of sinning alone (as is supposed) can eject the abiding seed;—that is, he sinneth not beyond the rate of sins of infirmity, nor in any such way as should render him incapable of communion or acceptance with God.

The apostle nextly advanceth farther with his design, and saith, "He that is born of God cannot sin;" that is, that sin which he sinneth not he cannot sin; he cannot fall under the power of reigning sin unto death. I confess the words "can" and "cannot" are variously used in the Scriptures; some kind of impossibility, in one respect or other (for things may be in some regard impossible that are not so absolutely), it always denoteth. The whole of the variety in this kind may be referred to two heads:—

1. That which is *morally* impossible. Of that it is said that it cannot be done. 2 Cor. xiii. 8, saith Paul, "We can do nothing against the truth;" and Acts iv. 20, say the apostles, "We cannot but speak the things we have seen and heard." It was morally impossible that ever any thing should have been done by Paul against the truth; or that the apostles, having received the Spirit, should not speak what they had seen and heard of Christ. And of many things that are thus morally impossible, there are most certain and determinate causes as to make the things so impossible as, in respect of the event, to be absolutely impossible. It is morally impossible that the devil should do that which is spiritually good, and yet absolutely impossible. There is more in many a thing that is morally impossible than a mere opposition to justice; as we say, "Illud possumus quod jure possumus." The causes of moral impossibility may be such as to tie up the thing which it relateth unto in an everlasting non-futurition. There is also,—

2. An impossibility that is *physical*, from the nature of the things themselves. So Jer. xiii. 23, "Can the Ethiopian change his skin?"

—that is, he cannot. Matt. vii. 18, "A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit;"—that is, nothing can act contrary to its own natural principles. And, as we shall see afterward, there is this impossibility in the "cannot" here mentioned. They *cannot* do it, upon the account of the new spiritual nature wherewith they are endued.

Now, there may be a third kind of impossibility in spiritual things arising from both these, which one hath not ineptly called the *ethico-physical* or *morally-natural*, partaking of the nature of both the others. It is *moral*, because it relateth to duty, what is to be done or not to be done; and it is *physical*, because it relateth to a cause or principle that can or cannot produce the effect. So our Saviour telleth the Pharisees, "How can ye, being evil, speak good things?" or, "ye cannot," Matt. xii. 34. "Ye cannot hear my word," John viii. 43. It was morally impossible they should either speak or hear, —that is, either do or believe that which is spiritually good,—having no principle that should enable them thereunto, having no root that should bear up unto fruit, being evil trees in themselves, and having a principle, a root, continually, universally, uninterruptedly, inclining and disposing them another way, to acts of a quite contrary nature. Of this kind is that impossibility here intimated. The effect denied is morally impossible, upon the account of the *internal physical* cause hindering of it.

However, then, the word in the Scripture may be variously taken, yet here it is, from adjacent circumstances, evidently restrained to such a signification as, in respect of the event, absolutely rejecteth the thing denied. The gradation of the apostle also leadeth us to it. "He sinneth not," nay, "he cannot sin." "He cannot sin" riseth in the assertion of that before expressed, "He sinneth not;" which absolutely rejecteth the gloss that some seek to put upon the words, namely, "That 'cannot sin' is no more but 'cannot sin easily, and cannot sin but as it were with difficulty, such is the antipathy and habitual opposition which they have to sin,'" which Mr Goodwin adhereth unto: for besides that this is in itself false, there being no such antipathy in any to sin but that they may easily fall into it, yea, and with great difficulty and labour do restrain [themselves] from it, as the apostle argueth at large, Rom. vii.; so is it also flatly contradictory to the words themselves. The apostle saith, "He that is born of God sinneth not, cannot sin." "He can sin," saith this gloss, "though *difficultly*." Now, he that can sin difficultly, can sin. "Can sin" and "cannot sin" are flatly contradictory. He cannot, then, sin at all the sin that is intended in the place of whom it is said, "He cannot sin."

Thus we have cleared the first proposition in the words, both as to the subject, "Every one that is born of God," and the predicate,

"Sinneth not, cannot sin;" which last expression, taken in its only proper and most usual signification, denoteth an impossibility of the event, and plainly confirmeth in direct terms the position we insist on from the words.

Mr Goodwin knoweth not well (if I am able to gather any thing of his thoughts from his expressions to the argument in hand) what to say to this assertion of the apostle. The argument he intendeth to deal withal from the place he casteth into this form: "He that sinneth not, neither can sin, cannot fall away; 'whosoever is born of God sinneth not, neither can sin:' ergo."

Coming to the consideration of that expression, "Cannot sin," he findeth out, as he supposeth, four several acceptations in the Scripture of the word "cannot," and giveth us an account of his thoughts upon the consideration of them,—that in respect of these senses both propositions are false. Now, one of the propositions being the express language and literal expression of the Holy Ghost, not varied in the least, there is no way to relieve himself from being thought and conceived to give the lie to the blessed Spirit of God, by flatly denying what he peremptorily affirmeth, but only by denying the word "cannot" to be taken in this place in any of the senses before mentioned. Doth he then fix on this course for his own extrication? doth he give in another sense of the word, which he accepts, and grants that in that sense the affirmation of the Holy Ghost may be true? Not in the least; yea, plainly, for one of the senses he supposeth himself to have found out of the word "cannot,"—namely, that it is said of men they cannot do such or such a thing, because of their averseness and indisposition to it, which he exemplifieth in that of Christ to the Pharisees, John viii. 43,—he afterward more than insinuateth that this is the sense wherein the words "Cannot sin" are in this place to be taken, sect. 34: so that he will not allow the Holy Ghost to speak the truth, although he take his words in what sense he pleaseth; yea, and adding a fifth sense, sect. 31 (which is all, it seemeth, he could find out, for we have heard not of any more), he denieth that to be the meaning of the place: and so shutteth up the mind of the Holy Ghost into some of those significations wherein if the words be taken, he saith, they are false. The discourse of Mr Goodwin, sect. 28–30 (being taken up with the consideration of the various significations of the word "cannot," and his inferences thereon, taking it in this place, this way or that way, then it is so or so, showing himself very skilful at fencing and warding off the force of our arguments,—as perhaps his thoughts of himself were upon a review of what he had done), we are not concerned in. And though it were very easy to manifest that, in the distribution of his instances for the exemplification of the several significations which in part he feigneth and fasteneth upon the words, he hath been overtaken with many gross mis-

takes, some of them occasioned by other corrupt principles than those now under consideration, yet none of the senses insisted on by him coming really up to the intendment of the Holy Ghost, without any disadvantage to our cause in hand, being wholly unconcerned therein, we may pass by that whole harangue.

That which looketh towards the argument under consideration appeareth first in sect. 31, which he thus proposeth: "If the said argument understandeth the phrase 'Cannot sin,' according to the fifth and last import mentioned of the word 'cannot,' wherein it soundeth an utter and absolute incapacity and impossibility, then in this sense the major proposition is granted, namely, 'He that doth not nor can sin cannot fall away from his faith.' Yet the minor is tardy, which saith, 'Whosoever is born of God sinneth not, neither can sin:' for he that is born of God is in no such incapacity of sinning; of sinning, I mean, in the sense formerly asserted to the scripture in hand, which amounteth to an absolute impossibility for him so to sin."

Ans. Because this seemeth to be the sense intended in the argument, and the minor proposition in this sense to be built upon the scripture in hand, let us consider whether the reason which is assigned for the said assertion doth necessarily enforce such a sense thereon. What we understand by this phrase, both as to that sin that is here intended, and that impossibility of committing it, or falling into it often, in that expression "cannot," hath been before discovered. An impossibility it is of the event, from the causes above mentioned, that the Holy Ghost intendeth. An utter and absolute incapacity to sin on any account we assert not; an impossibility of so sinning, in respect of the event, for the reasons and from the causes above mentioned, the Holy Ghost averreth. In this sense the first proposition is granted: "He that doth not commit sin, nor can sin, cannot fall away from his faith, or can[not] utterly lose it." The minor, which is the express language of the Holy Ghost, is questioned, and found tardy; that is, as I suppose, false. And the reason is added, namely, "That he that is born of God is in no such incapacity of sinning;" that is, of sinning in that kind of sinning which is here intended, which amounteth to an impossibility for him so to sin. Not to play fast and loose, under these ambiguous expressions of "Incapacity" and "Absolute impossibility," the event is positively denied upon the account of the prohibiting causes of it; and the incapacity asserted relateth not to the internal frame and principle only, but respecteth also other considerations. Whether these are such as to bear the weight of this exposition, is that which cometh nextly to be discussed; namely, the causes of this state and condition of those who are thus born of God, and the reasons investing that universal proposition, "Every one that is born of God cannot sin," with a necessary truth.

In the reasons added of the former affirmation, there is an emphatical distribution of the two parts of the predicate of the former proposition, by the way of ascending to a more vehement confirmation of them: "He that is born of God sinneth not." But why so? "His seed remaineth; neither can he sin." Why so? "Because he is born of God." It is an expressive pursuit of the same thing, and not a redoubling of the proposition; and this contexture of the words is so emphatically significant that it seemeth strange how any head of opposition can be made against it. There is no reason, then, to resolve the words into two propositions of distinct consideration each from other, it being one and the same thing that the apostle intendeth to express, though proceeding to heighten the certainty of the thing in the minds of them to whom he delivered it by the contexture of the words which he maketh use of. What is meant or intended by the "seed of God" we need not dispute. The argument of the apostle lieth not in the words "seed of God," nor in the word "abideth," but in the whole, "The seed of God abideth;" and therefore it were to no purpose at all to follow Mr Goodwin in his consideration of the word "seed," and then of the [words] "seed of God," and then of the word "abideth," divided one from another. The sum of his long answer is, "The word 'seed' doth not import any such thing as is aimed at from the text, nor the word 'abide;'" but to the whole proposition, "The seed of God abideth in him," as produced to confirm the former assertion of the not sinning of the persons spoken of, there is nothing spoken at all. I shall therefore briefly confirm the argument in hand by the strength here communicated unto it by the Holy Ghost, and then consider what is answered to any part of it, or objected to the interpretation insisted on. That "He that sinneth not, neither can sin," in the sense explained, shall never fall away totally or finally from God, is granted. That believers sin not, nor can sin so, or in the manner mentioned, besides the testimony of the Holy Ghost, worthy of all acceptation, in the clear assertion of it, we have the reasons thereof manifested in the discovery of the causes of its truth. The first reason is, "Because the seed of God abideth in them." A tacit grant seemeth to be made that fruit sometimes may not visibly appear upon them; as the case is with a tree in winter when it casts its leaves, but its seed remaineth. Grace may abide in the habit in and under a winter of temptation, though it doth not exert itself in bearing any such actual fruit as may be ordinarily visible. The word of God is sometimes called "incorruptible seed,"—seed causatively, as being an instrument in the hand of God whereby he planteth the seed of life and holiness in the heart. That it is not the outward word, but that which is produced and effected by it through the efficacy of the Spirit of God, that is by "seed" intended, is evident from the

use and nature of it, and its abiding in the person in whom it is. Whatever it is, it is called "seed," not in respect of that from whence it cometh, as is the cause and reason of that appellation of other seed, but in respect of that which it produceth, which ariseth and ensueth upon it; and it is called the "seed of God," because God useth it for the regeneration of his. Being from God, being the principle of the regeneration of them in whom it is, abiding in them even when it hath brought forth fruit, and continuing so to do, it can be no other but the new creature, new nature, inward man, new principle of life or habit of grace, that is bestowed upon all believers, whence they are regenerated, quickened, or born again; of which we have spoken before.

This seed, saith the Holy Ghost, "abideth" or "remaineth in him." Whatever falling or withering he may seem to have or hath, this seed, the seed of God, remaineth in him,—the principle of his new life abideth. Some exceptions are made, as we shall see afterward, to the signification of the word μένει, "remaineth," and instances given where it signifieth "to be," and denoteth the *essence* of a thing, not its *duration*. That to "abide," or "remain," is the proper signification of the word, I suppose will not be questioned. That it may in some place be used in another sense is not disputed. All that lieth under consideration here is, whether the word in this place be used properly, according to its genuine and first signification, or no. It supposeth, indeed, "to be" also, but properly signifieth only to "abide" or "remain." Now, if nothing can be advanced, from the text or context, from the matter treated on or the parallel significancy of some expression that is in conjunction with it, that should enforce us to carry it from its proper use and signification, the instancing of other places, if any such be, wherein it is restrained to denote being, and not duration, is altogether impertinent to the business in hand. When an argument is urged from any place of Scripture, to pick out any word in the text, and to manifest that it hath been used improperly in some other place, and therefore must be so in that, is a procedure so far from an ingenuous answer, that it will scarce pass for a tolerable shift or evasion. To "remain," then, or to "abide," is the proper signification of this word, and nothing is in the least offered to manifest that it must necessarily in this place be diverted from its proper use.

According to the import of the word, the seed of God remaineth in believers. Now, that *remaining of the seed* is the cause of their not sinning that sin, or in that manner as the apostle here denieth them to be liable to sin; for that is the reason he giveth why they cannot sin, even because the seed of God remaineth in them. Mr Goodwin granteth that this seed remaineth in believers always, unless they sin by a total defection from God. Of not sinning the sin

of total defection from God, the remaining or abiding of this seed is the cause. Whilst that abideth they cannot sin that sin; for it is an unquestionable cause, and uncontrollable, of their not so doing. This seed, therefore, must be utterly lost and taken away before any such sin can be committed. Now, if the seed cannot be lost without the commission of the sin, which cannot be committed till it be lost, neither can the seed be lost nor the sin be committed. The same thing cannot be before and after itself. He that cannot go such a journey unless he have such a horse, and cannot have such a horse unless he go such a journey, is like to stay at home. In what sense the words "Cannot sin" are to be taken was before declared. That there are sins innumerable whereinto men may fall notwithstanding this seed, is confessed. Under them all this seed abideth. So it would not do under that which we cannot sin because it abideth; but because it abideth that sin cannot be committed.

The latter part of the reason of the apostle's assertion is, "For he is born of God;" which is, indeed, a driving on the former to its head and fountain. What it is to be "born of God" we need not dispute; it was sufficiently discovered in the mention that was made before of the "seed of God." God, by his Holy Spirit bestowing on us a new spiritual life, which by nature we have not, and in respect of whose want we are said to be dead, is frequently said to "beget" us, James i. 18, and we are said to be "born of God." He is the sovereign disposer, dispenser, and supreme fountain, of that life which is so bestowed on us, which we are begotten again unto, and are born with and by. And Jesus Christ, the mediator, is also said to have this "life in himself," John v. 26, because he hath received the Spirit of the Father to give to his, for their quickening; who taketh of his, and thereby begetteth them anew. And this life which believers thus receive, and whereby, indeed, radically they become believers, is everywhere in Scripture noted as permanent and abiding. In respect of the original of it, it is said to be "from above, from heaven, of the will of God, of God;" as to its principle, to be "not of flesh, or blood, or of the will of man," or of any thing done by us, but of the "seed of God, incorruptible seed, seed that abideth;" in respect of its duration, to be "eternal," and that it may so be, to be safe-guarded, being "hid with Christ in God." In this place, receiving this life from God is placed as the cause, and "Cannot sin" as the effect. "He cannot sin, for" or because, "he is born of God." The connection that is between this cause and effect, or wherein the causality of being born of God to a not sinning doth consist, needs not be inquired into. That it hath such a causality the Holy Ghost hath asserted, and our argument resteth thereon. If that be the nature of regeneration or being born of God, that it doth exclude apostasy, then he that is regenerate or born of God, as every believer is, can-

not so sin as to apostatize or fall totally from God; but that such is the nature of regeneration, whereby any one is born of God, the Holy Ghost here declareth, for he denieth apostasy upon the account of regeneration, "He cannot sin, because he is born of God;" which is that which we intended to demonstrate from this text of Scripture.

To evade the force of this argument, Mr Goodwin, as hath been declared, undertaketh to give an exposition of this place of Scripture, turning every stone, and labouring to wrest every word in it. The several significations of the words in other places are set out, and suppositions made of taking them this way or that way; but in what sense the scope of the matter treated on, and the most usual, known, common acceptations, call for their use in this place, nothing is spoken, neither is any clear answer once attempted to be given to the words of the text, speaking out and home to the conclusion we intend, or to the argument thence deduced. What I can gather up from sect. 31 and forwards, that may obstruct the thoughts of any in closing with the interpretation given, I shall consider and remove out of the way:—First, then, he giveth you this interpretation of these words, "Sinneth not," or "Cannot sin:" "'Every one that hath been born of God sinneth not;' that is, whosoever hath, by the word and Spirit of God, been made partaker of the divine nature, so as to resemble God in the frame and constitution of his heart and soul, doth not, under such a frame or change of heart as this, make a trade or practice of sinning, or of walking in any course of inordinateness in the world. Yea, saith he, in the latter proposition, 'Every such person doth not only or simply refrain sinning in such a sense, but he cannot sin;' that is, he hath a strong and potent disposition in him which carrieth him another way, for he hath a strong antipathy or averseness of heart and soul against all sin, especially all such kind of sinning."

Ans. 1. What is meant by being "born of God," the way whereby any come so to be, the universality of the expression, requiring a necessary cause of its verity, with the like attendancies of the proposition, have been before declared.

2. What Mr Goodwin intendeth by such a "frame and constitution of heart and soul as may resemble God," with his denial of the bestowing on us from God of a vital principle of grace, wherein the renovation in us of his image should consist, hath in part also been already discovered, and will yet farther be so, in our consideration of his rare notion of regeneration, and its consisting in a man's return to the innocent and harmless estate wherein he was born.

3. That "Sinneth not" is "Sinneth not that sin," or "So sinneth not as to break his relation to God as a child," hath been already also manifested, and the reader is not to be burdened with repetitions.

4. In the interpretation given of the latter phrase, "He cannot

sin," I cannot so sin against the light of the text as to join with Mr Goodwin in it. It is not the "antipathy of his heart to sin," but the course of his walking with God in respect of sin, that the apostle treateth on. His internal principling against sin he hath from being "born of God" and the "abiding of his seed in him;" of which this, that "he cannot sin," is asserted as the effect. "He cannot sin," —that is, he cannot so sin upon the account of his being "born of God" (thence, indeed, he hath not only "a potent disposition another way and antipathy to evil," but a vital principle with an everlasting enmity and repugnancy to and inconsistency with any such sin or sinning as is intimated); and that he cannot sin is the consequent and effect thereof, and is so affirmed to be by the Holy Ghost.

Nextly, Mr Goodwin giveth you the reason of this assertion used by the apostle, why such an one as of whom he speaketh sinneth not, and cannot sin: "'Now the reason,' saith the apostle, 'why such a person committeth not sin in the sense explained is, because his seed, the seed of God, by whom and of which he was born of him, remaineth in him;' that is, is, or hath an actual and present being or residence, in him. And that in this place it doth not signify any perpetual abiding, or any abiding in relation to the future, is evident, because the abiding of the seed here spoken of is given as the reason why he that is born of God doth not commit sin; that is, doth not frequently walk in any course of known sin. Now, nothing in respect of any future permanency or continuance of being can be looked upon as the cause of an effect, but only in respect of the present being or residence of it. The reason why the soul moveth to-day is not because it will move or act the body to-morrow, or because it is in the body to-day upon such terms that it will be in to-morrow also, much less because it is an immortal substance, but simply because it is now or this day in the body. So the reason why angels at this day do the will of God is not because they have such a principle of holiness or obedience in them which they cannot put off or lose to eternity, but because of such a principle as we speak of residing in them at present. Therefore, when John assigneth the remaining of the seed of God in him that is born of him for the reason why he doth not commit sin, certain it is that by this remaining of the seed he meaneth nothing else but the present residence or abode thereof in this person; and if his intent had been either to assert or imply a perpetual residence of this seed in him that is born of God, it had been much more proper for him to have saved it for a reason of the latter proposition, 'He that is born of God cannot sin,' than to have subjoined it as a reason of the former; for though the future continuance of the thing in being can be no reason of the effect present, yet it will be a ground or reason of the continuance of a present effect."

Ans. I have thus at large transcribed this discourse, because it is

the sum of what Mr Goodwin hath to offer for the weakening of our argument from this place. Of what weight this is will quickly appear; for,—

1. This reason, "The seed abideth in him" though brought in illatively, in respect of what was said before, 'He doth not commit sin," yet hath its causal influence chiefly into that which followeth, "He cannot sin." To make good what was first spoken of his not committing sin that is born of God, the apostle discovereth the cause of it; which so far secureth the truth of that expression as that it causeth it to ascend, and calls him up higher, to a certain impossibility of doing of that which was only at first simply denied. Neither is this assertion, "The seed of God abideth in him," any otherwise a reason of the first assertion, "He committeth not sin," than as it is the cause of the latter, "He cannot sin." Now, Mr Goodwin granteth, in the close of his discourse, that "the future continuance of a thing in being is, or may be, the cause of the continuance of an effect which at present it produceth;"—and what[ever] Mr Goodwin may more curiously discover of the intent of the apostle, his words plainly assert the continuance and abode of the seed of God in them in whom it is; and using it as he doth, for a reason of the latter clause of that proposition, "He cannot sin," he speaketh properly enough, so great a master (of one language at least) as Mr Goodwin being judge.

2. The reason insisted on by the apostle is neither from the word "seed," nor from the word "abideth," nor from the nature of the seed simply considered, nor from its permanency and continuance, "The seed abideth;" so that it is no exception to the intendment of the apostle to assert the abiding of the seed not to be a sufficient cause of the proposition, because its abiding or permanency is not a cause of present not sinning, for it is not asserted that it is. His present not sinning in whom it is, is from God, his being born of God by the seed; his continuance and estate of not sinning (both which are intended) is from the abiding of the seed. The whole condition of the person, that "He sinneth not, neither can sin" (which terms regard his continued estate), is from the whole proposition, "The seed of God abideth in him." Separate the permanency of the seed, which is asserted, in the consideration of it, and it respects only and solely the continuance of the effect which is produced by it as seed, or of the estate wherein any one is placed by being born of God. All that Mr Goodwin hath to offer in this case is, that the abiding of the seed is so asserted to be the reason of that part of the proposition, "He committeth not sin," as not to be the cause τῆς αὐξήσεως, "He cannot sin;" when the abiding of the seed, singly considered, is not used as any reason at all of the first, nor in the proposition as it lieth, "The seed abideth," any otherwise but as it is the cause of the latter, "He cannot sin."

3. Even the expression, "He committeth not sin," denoteth not only the present actual frame and walking of him of whom it is spoken, but his estate and condition. Being once born of God, he committeth not sin. No one that is so born of God doth. None in the state and condition of a regenerate person doth so; that is, in his course and walking to the end. And this is argued not so much distinctly to the permanency of the seed, as from the seed with such an adjunct.

4. Mr Goodwin's allusions to the soul and the obedience of angels are of little use, or none at all, to the illustration of the business in hand; for though the reason why the soul moveth the body to-day is not because it will move it to-morrow, yet the reason why the body moveth, and cannot but do so, is because it hath the soul abiding in it, and he that shall say, "He that liveth moveth, for he hath a soul abiding in him and cannot but move," shall speak properly enough. And the reason why the angels do the will of God in heaven,—that is, actually continue in so doing,—is, because they have such a confirmed and uncontrollable principle of obedience. So that all these exceptions amount not to the least weakening of the apostle's arguments.

Sect. 32. Our author giveth two instances to prove that the word μένει in the Scripture signifieth sometimes only "to be," and not "to abide," and they are, the one, John xiv. 17, and the other, 1 John iii. 14; and one argument to manifest that in the place under consideration it must needs signify a present abode and being, and not a continuance, etc.

Ans. 1. If any such places be found, yet it is confessed that it is an *unusual* sense of the word, and a thousand places of that kind will not enforce it to be so taken in another place, unless the circumstances of it and matter whereabout it treateth enforce that sense, and will not bear that which is proper.

2. Mr Goodwin doth not make it good by the instances he produceth that the word is tied up in any place to denote precisely only the being of a thing, without relation to its abiding and continuance. Of the one, John xiv. 17, "But ye know him, because he abideth with you, and shall be in you," saith he, "The latter clause, 'Shall be in you,' will be found a mere tautology if the other phrase, 'Abideth with you,' importeth a perpetual residence or in-being." But that this phrase, "Abideth with you," importeth the same with the phrase in the foregoing verse, where it is clearly expounded by the addition of the term "For ever" ("That he may abide with you for ever"), I suppose cannot be questioned. Nor,—

3. Is there any the least appearance of a tautology in the words, his remaining with believers being the thing promised, and his in-being the manner of his abode with them. Also 1 John iii. 14,

Μένει ἐν τῷ θανάτῳ, doth not simply denote an estate or condition, but an estate or condition in its nature, without the interposition of almighty grace, abiding and permanent; so that neither have we yet any instance of restraining the significancy of the word, as pretended, produced; nor, if any place could be so, would it in the least enforce that acceptation of the word in this place contended about. Wherefore Mr Goodwin, as I said, addeth an argument to evince that the word must necessarily be taken in the sense by him insisted on in this place; which is indeed a course to the purpose, if his argument prove so in any measure; it is this: "Because such a signification of it would render the sense altogether inconsistent with the scope of the apostle, which is to exhort Christians unto righteousness and love of the brethren. Now, it is contrary to common sense itself to signify unto those whom we persuade to any duty any such thing as imports an absolute certainty or necessity of their doing it, whether they take care or use any means for the doing of it or no; and a clear case it is that the certainty of a perpetual remaining of the seed of God in those that are born of him importeth a like certainty of their perpetual performance of that duty whereunto they are exhorted."

Ans. If this be all, it might have been spared. The argument consisteth of two parts:—1. An aspersion of the infinite wisdom of God with a procedure contrary to all reason and common sense. 2. A begging of the thing in question betwixt its author and its adversaries. That there is any thing at all in the text, even according to our interpretation of it, that importeth an absolute necessity of men's doing any thing, whether they take care to use the means of doing it or no, the reader must judge. The abiding of the seed is that, we say, which shall effectually cause them in whom it is to use the means of not sinning, that eventually they may not do so; and that a certainty of the use of means is imported is no argument to prove that their necessity of persevering is proved, whether they use means or no. To take care to use means is amongst the means appointed to be used; and this they shall do upon the account of the abiding seed. That, indeed, which is opposed is, that God cannot promise to work effectually in us by the use of means, for the accomplishment of an appointed end, but that withal he rendereth useless and vain all his exhortations to us to use those means. This is Mr Goodwin's argument from the place itself, to enforce that improper acceptation of the words "Remaineth in us."

What remaineth of Mr Goodwin's long discourse upon this text of Scripture is but a fencing with himself, and raising of objections and answering of them suitably to his own principles, wherein we are not in the least concerned. There is not any thing from the beginning to the end of it that tendeth to impeach our interpretation of the place, or impede the progress of our argument, but only a

flourish set up on his own exposition; which if he were desired to give in briefly, and in terms of a plain, downright significancy, I am verily persuaded he would be hardly put to it to let us know what his mind and conceptions of this place of Scripture are. But of this subject, and in answer to his fifth argument, with the chapter, this is the issue.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE BEARING OF THE DOCTRINE OF THE SAINTS' APOSTASY ON THEIR CONSOLATION.

Mr G.'s seventh argument, about the tendency of the doctrine of the saints' apostasy as to their consolation, proposed, considered—What that doctrine offereth for the consolation of the saints stated—The impossibility of its affording the least true consolation manifested—The influence of the doctrine of the saints' perseverance into their consolation—The medium whereby Mr G. confirms his argument examined—What kind of nurse for the peace and consolation of the saints the doctrine of apostasy is—Whether their obedience be furthered by it—What are the causes and springs of true consolation—Mr G.'s eighth argument proposed to consideration—Answer thereunto—The minor proposition considered—The Holy Ghost not afraid of the saints' miscarriages—The confirmation of his minor proposition proposed and considered—The discourse assigned to the Holy Ghost by Mr G., according to our principles, considered—Exceptions against it—The first—The second—The third—The fourth—The fifth—The sixth—The seventh—The foundation of Mr G.'s pageant everted—The procedure of the Holy Ghost in exhortations, according to our principles—Sophisms in the former discourse farther discovered—His farther plea in this case proposed, considered—The instance of Christ and his obedience considered and vindicated, as to the application of it to the business in hand—Mr G.'s last argument proposed, examined—1 John ii. 19 explained; vindicated—Argument from thence for the perseverance of the saints—Mr G.'s exceptions thereunto considered and removed—The same words farther pursued—Mr G.'s consent with the Remonstrants manifested by his transcriptions from their Synodalia—Our argument from 1 John ii. 19 fully cleared—The conclusion of the examination of Mr G.'s arguments for the apostasy of the saints.

THE seventh argument, which Mr Goodwin insisteth upon in the 36th section of his 13th chapter, contains one of the greatest rarities he hath to show in the whole pack, concerning the influence of the doctrine of the saints' apostasy into their consolation in their walking with God; an undertaking so uncapable of any logical confirmation, as that though Mr Goodwin interweaves his discourse concerning it with a syllogism, yet he quickly leaves that thorny path, and pursues it only with a rhetorical flourish of words, found out and set in order to deceive. At the head, then, of his discourse, he placeth this argument, as it is called:—

"That doctrine whose genuine and proper tendency is to advance

the peace and joy of the saints in believing is of a natural sympathy with the gospel, and upon this account a truth; such is the doctrine which informeth the saints of a possibility of their total and final falling away: *ergo.*"

The proposition of this syllogism he supposes we will grant; and (not to trouble the reader with the qualifications and limitations formerly annexed to that which proposed the furtherance of the obedience of the saints as a proof of the truth of any doctrine) for my part I do. For the proof of the assumption, wherein alone Mr Goodwin's interest in this argument doth lie, he refers us to his 9th chapter, where, as he tells us (if we may believe him), he hath "undeniably demonstrated the truth of it;" but we have considered whatever looks that way in that chapter, and have found it all as chaff and stubble before the breath of the Spirit of the Lord in the word. That which lies upon his shoulders to support (a burden too heavy for him to bear), and whose demonstration he hath undertaken, is, that it tends to the peace, joy, and consolation, of the saints of God, in their walking with him (which arises from, and solely depends upon, that assurance they have of their eternal fruition of him through Christ), to be instructed that indeed they are in themselves weak, unable to do any thing as they ought; that they have no strength to continue in the mercy of God, but carry about with them a body of death; and that they are continually exposed to a world of temptations, whereby many strong men fall down, are thrust through, and slain every day; that in this condition there is no consideration of the immutability or unchangeableness of God that may secure them of the continuance of his love to them, no eternal purpose of his that he will preserve them and keep them through his power, no promise of not leaving them, or of giving them such supplies of his Spirit and grace that they shall never forsake or leave him, nothing in the covenant, or oath of God whereby it is confirmed, to assure them of an abiding and not-to-be-destroyed communion with him; that Christ by his death and oblation hath not so taken away the guilt of their sins, nor laid such a sure foundation for the destruction of the power of them, as that they shall not arise either way to their ruin; that he intercedes not for their preservation in faith and holiness;—upon the account of which state and condition of things, many of the most eminent saints that ever served God in this world have utterly fallen out of his love and favour, and have been cast out of covenant, from whence, though perhaps some few have been recovered, yet far the greatest part of them have perished everlastingly (as is the state in reference unto many in every generation): only, such may do well to consider what a fearful and desperate issue their apostasy will have if they should so fall, and what an eminent reward, with what glory, is proposed to them,

if they persevere. That, I say, the instruction of the saints in this doctrine is a singular means of promoting their consolation and establishing their peace is that which (doubtless with undervaluing thoughts of all with whom he hath to do) he hath undertaken to prove. I doubt not but that Mr Goodwin thought sometimes of the good old rule :—

> "Sumite materiam vestris, qui scribitis, æquam
> Viribus; et versate diu, quid ferre recusent,
> Quid valeant humeri." Hor. Ep. ad Pison., 38.

Self-confidence is hereby settled and fixed with considerations; and though Mr Goodwin, in the close of this section, tells us "that sundry godly and seriously religious persons, when they heard this doctrine published which he now asserts, with their whole hearts blessed God for it," yet truly I cannot but question whether, yea, I must positively deny that ever, any saint of God received consolation by the doctrine of the saints' apostasy,—a lie exceedingly unsuited to the production of any such effect, any farther than that all error whatsoever is apt to defile and cauterize the conscience, so deceiving it with senselessness for peace. Perhaps some of Mr Goodwin's hearers, (who either were so ignorant or so negligent as not to be acquainted with this doctrine before, in the attempts made for the propagation of it by the later brood of prelates and Arminians amongst us,) upon his delivery of it with enticing words of human wisdom, helped on by the venerable esteem they have of his transcendent parts and abilities, through the cunning of Satan, improving the itching after new doctrines which is fallen upon the minds and spirits of many professors in this age, have rejoiced under the shadow of this bramble, set up to rule in their congregation, and (according as is the constant manner of all in our days that are ensnared with any error, be it never so pernicious) have blessed God for it, professing they never found rest nor peace before: yet I no way question but such as fear the Lord, and are yet bowed down under the weight and carried away with the strength of Mr Goodwin's rhetoric for a season, will quickly find a fire proceeding out of that newly-enthroned doctrine, preying upon and consuming all their joy, peace, and consolation; or (which I rather hope) a fire proceeding out of their faith "the faith once delivered to the saints," to the utter confusion and consumption of this bramble,—[this] scratching error. In the meantime, if the eminent appearance of many thousands of the saints of God in this nation (whereof many are fallen asleep, and many continue to this day), testifying and bearing witness to the joy and consolation they have found, and that upon spiritual, demonstrative grounds, in being cast into the mould of the doctrine of the saints' perseverance, for many days, be of no weight with Mr Goodwin, I know not why his single testimony (which yet, as to the matter of

fact, I no way question) concerning some few persons, by himself seduced into a persuasion of their apostasy, blessing God for the discovery made to them (the constant practice of all persons in their first entanglement in the foulest and grossest error whatever), should sway us much to any good liking of it.

The influence of the doctrine of the saints' perseverance into their consolation hath been sufficiently already evinced, when we manifested the support of their faith and love, the conquest of their fears and troubles thereby, so that I shall not need farther to insist thereon. It was in my thoughts, indeed, to have handled the nature of gospel consolation,—that which God is so abundantly willing the heirs of promise should receive,—at large, both as to the nature and causes of it, the means of its preservation, and the oppositions that lie against it; and by all the considerations of it to have manifested that it is utterly impossible to keep it alive one moment in the heart of a believer without the contribution of supportment it receives from the doctrine in hand, and that those who refuse to receive it, as usually delivered, indeed have none, nor can have any drop of it, but what is instilled into them from and by the power and efficacy which secretly in and upon their hearts that truth hath which in words they oppose, all their peace and comfort being indeed absolutely proportioned to that which the doctrine of the saints' perseverance tends to confirm, and to nothing else: but this discourse growing under my hands beyond all thought or expectation, I shall now only keep close to the removal of the exceptions made against it, and hasten to a close.

I must not leave this argument without taking notice of the medium whereby Mr Goodwin supposeth himself to have confirmed the truth of the assumption laid down at the entrance, or to have manifested "the good complexion," as he phrases it, "of that nurse he hath provided" for the consolation of the saints. A nurse with breasts of flint and a heart of iron hath this cruel man provided for them;—a nurse whom God will never admit into his family, nor ever expose his children's lives to any such wolf or tiger as will certainly starve them, if not devour them;—rather a curst, yea, an accursed stepdame than a nurse, who when the children ask for bread gives them a stone, and when they beg for a fish gives them a scorpion;—a false and treacherous hireling, doing not the least service for God, but labouring to stir up strife in his family, to set his poor children and their heavenly Father at variance; filling them with hard thoughts of him, as one that takes little or no care for them, and discouraging them in that obedience which he requireth at their hands; continually belying their Father to them, and that in reference to the most desirable excellencies of his faithfulness, truth, mercy, and grace; never speaking one good or comfortable word to

them all their days, nor once urging them to do their duty but with holding a rod, yea scorpions, over their heads, and casting the eternal flames of hell into their faces. This is that sanguine, indeed truly spiritually bloody, complexion of this new nurse, which is offered to be received in the room of that sad, melancholy piece, the perseverance of the saints. Thus, then, he proceeds:—

"The consolation of true believers depends upon their obedience; their obedience is furthered by this doctrine: and therefore their consolation also."

Ans. What are the springs of true, spiritual, heavenly consolation, the consolation which God is willing believers should receive, whence it flows, the means of its continuance and increase, how remote it is from a sole dependency on our own obedience, hath been in part before declared. But yet if the next assertion can be made good, namely, "That the doctrine of the saints' apostasy hath a tendency, instituted of God, to the promotion of their obedience and holiness," I shall not contend about the other, concerning the issuing of their consolation from thence. All that really is offered in the behalf of apostasy, as to its serviceableness in this kind, is, that it is suited to ingenerate in believers a fear of hell, which will put them upon all ways of mortifying the flesh and the fruits of it, which otherwise would bring them thereinto. And is this indeed the great mystery of the gospel? Is this Christ's way of dealing with his saints? or is it not a falling from grace, to return again unto the law? Those of whom alone we speak, who are concerned in this business, are all of them taken into the glorious liberty of the sons of God; are every one of them partakers of that Spirit with whom is liberty; are all endued with a living principle of grace, faith, and love, and are constrained by the love of Christ to live to him; are all under grace, and not under the law; all have their sins in some measure begun to be mortified, and the flesh with the lusts thereof, the old man, with all his ways and wills, crucified, by the death and cross of Christ, brought with their power and efficacy by the Spirit into their hearts; are all delivered from that bondage wherein they were, for fear of death and hell, all their days, by having Christ made redemption unto them. I say, that these persons should be most effectually stirred up to obedience by the dread and terror of the iron rod of vengeance and hell, and that they should be so by God's appointment, is such a new, such another gospel, as, though preached by an angel from heaven, we should not receive. That indeed no motive can be taken from hence, or from any thing in the doctrine by Mr Goodwin contended for, suited to the principle of gospel obedience in the saints; that no sin or lust whatsoever was ever mortified by it; that it is a clog, hinderance, and burden to all saints, as far as they have to do with it, in the ways of God,—hath been before demonstrated: and therefore,

leaving it, with all the consolation that it affords, unto those who of God are given up thereunto, we proceed to the consideration of another argument, his eighth in this case, which is thus proposed, sect. 37:—

"That doctrine which evacuates and turns into weakness and folly all the gracious counsels of the Holy Ghost, which consist partly in the diligent information which he gives unto the saints, from place to place, concerning the hostile, cruel, and bloody mind and intention of Satan against them; partly in detecting and making known all his subtle stratagems, his plots, methods, and dangerous machinations against them; partly, also, in furnishing them with special weapons of all sorts, whereby they may be able to grapple with him and to triumph over him; partly, again, in those frequent admonitions and exhortations to quit themselves like men in resisting him, which are found in the Scripture; and, lastly, in professing his fear lest Satan should circumvent and deceive them;—that doctrine, I say, which reflects disparagement and vanity upon all these most serious and gracious applications of the Holy Ghost must needs be a doctrine of vanity and error, and consequently that which opposeth it, by a like necessity, a truth; but such is the common doctrine of absolute and infallible perseverance: *ergo.*"

Ans. Not to engage into any needless contest about ways of arguing when the design and strength of the argument are evident, I shall only remark two things upon this:—

First, The Holy Ghost professing his fear lest Satan should beguile believers is a mistake. It was Paul that was so afraid, not the Holy Ghost, though he wrote that fear by the appointment and inspiration of the Holy Ghost. The apostle was jealous lest the saints should, by the craft of Satan, be seduced into errors and miscarriages; which yet argues not their final defection. This, indeed, he records of himself; but of the fear of the Holy Ghost, arising from his uncertainty of those issues of the things, and want of power to prevent the coming on of the things feared, I suppose there is no mention. And,—

Secondly, That the consequent of the supposition in the inference made upon it is not so clear to me as to Mr Goodwin,—namely, "Suppose any doctrine to be false, whatsoever doctrine is set up in opposition to it is true." I have known, and so hath Mr Goodwin also, when the truth hath lain between opposite doctrines, assaulted by both, entertained by neither. With these observations I pass the major of this syllogism; the minor he thus confirms:—

"If the saints be in no possibility of being finally overcome by Satan, or of miscarrying in the great and most important business of their salvation, by his snares and subtleties, all that operoseness and diligence of the Holy Ghost, in those late-mentioned address-

ments of his unto them, in order to their final conquest over Satan will be found of very light consequence, of little concernment to them; yea, if the said addressments of the Holy Ghost be compared with the state and condition of the saints, as the said doctrine of perseverance representeth and affirmeth it to be, the utter uselessness and impertinency of them will much more evidently appear."

Ans. What possibility or not possibility the saints are in of final apostasy from God; what assurance themselves have, may have, or have not, concerning their perseverance; with what is the use of admonitions and exhortations to them in that condition,—have been already declared. For the present I shall only add, that let their final apostasy in respect of the event be never so impossible, yet, in the state and condition wherein they are, and from the things which they are exercised about, with the principles on which they proceed, and the ways whereby they are led on, considerations enough may be raised to set forth those exhortations, admonitions, and encouragements, appointed by the Holy Ghost to be used and insisted on in the administration of the word, in the beauty and splendour of infinite wisdom, love, and kindness. The glory of God being so eminently concerned as it is in the obedience and fruitfulness of the saints; the honour of the Lord Jesus in this world, with the advancement and propagation of the gospel, in like manner relating thereunto; their own peace lying so much as it doth upon their close walking with God; the Spirit being so grieved by their falling into sin as he is; God so dishonoured, and themselves exposed to such fearful desertions, darkness, trouble, sorrow, and disquietments as they are, upon their being overcome by the temptations of Satan, and prevailed upon to turn aside into ways and sins short of total apostasy; and it being the purpose of the Lord to lead them on in obedience, in ways suitable to that *nature* he created them withal, and that *new nature* wherewith he hath endued them (both apt to be wrought upon by motives, exhortations, and persuasions), without any such supposal as that of final apostasy;—there is a sufficient bottom and foundation of exalting the motives and admonitions insisted on to the possession of that glory of wisdom and goodness which is their due. But Mr Goodwin having borrowed another pageant from the Remonstrants, had a great mind to show it to the world in its English dress, and therefore introduces the Holy Ghost thus speaking in the admonitions above pointed at:—

"Suppose we, then, the Holy Ghost should speak thus unto the saints: 'O ye that truly believe, who, by virtue of the promises of that God that cannot lie, are fully persuaded and possessed that ye shall be kept by God, by his irresistible grace, in true faith until death; so that though Satan should set all his wits on work, and

by all his stratagems, snares, and cunning devices, seek to destroy you; yea, though he should entice you away from God by the allurements of the world, and entangle you with them again; yea, and should cause you to run and rush headlong, against the light of your own consciences, into all manner of horrid sins; yet shall all his attempts and assaults upon you in every kind be in vain, and you shall be in never the more danger or possibility of perishing;—unto you, I say, attend and consider how sore and dangerous a contest you are like to be engaged in; for you are to wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers, the governors of this world, and spiritual wickednesses, against that old serpent the devil, the great red dragon, who was a murderer from the beginning, and who still goes about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour, who will set himself with all his might to thrust you headlong into all manner of sins, and so to separate between you and your God for ever. And truly I am afraid lest, as the serpent by his subtlety deceived Eve, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity which is in Jesus Christ,—lest the tempter should any way tempt you, and my labour about you be in vain. Therefore watch, pray, resist him steadfast in the faith. Take unto you the whole armour of God, that you may be able to resist in an evil day, and having done all things stand fast,—stand, having your loins girt with the girdle of truth, and the breastplate of righteousness upon you.' Would such an oration or speech as this be any way worthy the infinite wisdom of the Holy Ghost? Or is it not the part of a very weak and simple person to admonish a man, and that in a most serious and solemn manner, of a danger threatening him or hanging over his head, and withal to instruct him with great variety of direction and caution how to escape this danger, when, as both himself knows and the person admonished knows likewise, it is a thing altogether impossible that ever the danger should befall him, or the evil against which he is so solemnly cautioned come upon him? Therefore, those who make the Holy Ghost to have part and fellowship in such weakness as this are most insufferably injurious unto him."

Ans. To support the stage for to act this part of the pageant in hand upon, there are many supposals fixed by our author, that are to bear up the weight of the whole; which, upon trial, will appear to be arrant false pretences, painted antics, that have not the least strength, or efficacy for the end and purpose whereunto they are applied.

1. It is supposed that the end of all these admonitions is merely and solely to prevent the saints from final apostasy, and that they are to beware of the wiles and assaults of Satan, only lest he prevail over them to cause them to depart utterly from God. That this is supposed in this discourse is evident, because upon the granting of a promise that they shall not be so prevailed against, they are judged

all useless and ridiculous. Now, who knows not but that Satan may winnow, and in some measure prevail against, the saints, to the dishonour of God, the reproach of the gospel, grieving of the Spirit, and scandal of the church, although they fall not totally and finally from God? And that many of those admonitions tend to the preservation of believers from such falls and failings is more evident than to need any demonstration by consideration of the particular instances.

2. It supposeth, as is expressed, that believers may fall into "all manner of horrid sins and abominations;" which is the thing in question, and by us punctually denied. Whatever their surprisals may be, yet there are sins which they cannot fall into; and the great abomination of every sin that is committed with the whole heart and with full consent they are not at all exposed or liable unto, as hath been proved.

3. That there is an inconsistency between promises and precepts in reference to the same object; that God should promise to work any thing effectually in us and yet require it of us, is thought ridiculous; and on this account the great folly here imputed to the discourse framed for the Holy Ghost is proposed to consist in this, that God should exhort us to watch against the assaults of the devil, and yet promise that by his grace he will effectually work in us and for us the very same thing,—a supposal destructive to the whole nature of the new covenant, easily disproved by innumerable instances.

4. That believers are to be wrought upon to obedience always, whatever the frame of their spirits be, by the same ways and means. Hence it is that promises, promises of highest and greatest assurance, are in this discourse coupled with cautions of the deepest charge, as though they must at the same time operate the same way to believers, or else the Holy Ghost be liable to be traduced as inconsistent with himself; when the great variety that is in their spiritual frame and temper, the manifold temptations wherewith they are assaulted, the light and dark places they walk through, etc., give occasion sufficient to the exercising towards them all the "piping" and "mourning" that is provided for them.

5. That all believers are assured of their perseverance, and that to such a degree as not to fear any apostasy or to care what becomes of them (that is, assured to presumption, not believing),—and therefore are those cautions and admonitions of the Holy Ghost on that account, tending to stir up in them any godly care or fear, rendered frustrate,—when Mr Goodwin himself thinks that very few of them do upon any good and abiding foundation know themselves to be believers, and we never once supposed that all of them have assurance of their perseverance, nor any of them upon the terms here proposed. All the strength of what is here insinuated lies in this, that God gives assurance to men of the steadfastness and constancy

of his love under supposal of their falling into all manner of abominable sins; which supposal alone renders an inconsistency between the sense of the promises we embrace and that of the admonitions that are given to the saints charging them to walk heedfully and to watch diligently against the attempts and assaults of Satan. Now, this supposal is in itself false and ridiculous; neither ever did the Lord, nor do we say he ever did, tender men assurance of his love on such terms, neither is it possible for any one ever to have a true persuasion of his own perseverance under such notions.

6. That there is an inconsistency betwixt faithful promises of attaining an end by the use of means, and exhortations with admonitions to make use of those means. So that if it be supposed that God promiseth that Satan shall not in the issue prevail over us, prescribing to us the means whereby we shall be preserved from his prevalency, it is in vain to deal with us for the application of ourselves unto the use of those means.

7. It is also supposed that an assurance of the love of God, and of the continuance of it to the saints unto the end, so that they shall never be utterly rejected by him, is an effectual way and means to induce them to carnal and loose walking, and a negligence in those things which are a provocation to the eyes of his glory; and therefore, if he promise faithfully never to leave us nor forsake us, it is an inducement for us to conclude, Let the devil now take his swing, and do with us what he pleaseth. To exhort us to take care for the avoidance of his subtleties and opposition is a thing altogether ridiculous. The vanity of this supposal hath been sufficiently before discovered and itself disproved.

Upon such hypotheses as these, I say, upon such painted posts, is the whole pageant erected which we are here engaged withal; and these being easily cast down, the whole rushes to the ground, in the room whereof, according to our principles, this following discourse may be supplied:—

"Ye that are true believers, called, justified, sanctified, by the Spirit and blood of Christ, adopted into my family, ingrafted in and united unto the Son of my love, I know your weakness, insufficiency, disability, darkness, how that without my Son and continual supply of his Spirit ye can do nothing. The power of your indwelling sin is not hid from me, how with violence it leads you captive to the law thereof. And though ye do believe, yet I know ye have also some unhealed unbelief, and on that account are often overwhelmed with fears, sorrows, disconsolations, and troubles, and are ready often to think that your way is passed over from me, and your judgment hidden from your God. And in this condition I know the assaults, temptations, and oppositions of Satan that you are exposed to, how he goes up and down like a roaring lion, seeking to destroy you. His

ways, methods, wiles, and baits, that he lays for you, and whereby he seeks to destroy you, are many. He acts against you as a serpent, subtilely and wisely; as a lion, dreadfully and fearfully; and [as a fowler,] with snares not of you, by yourselves, to be resisted. You have principalities and powers to wrestle withal, and the darts of the wicked one to defend yourselves against. Wherefore beware of him, be not ignorant of his devices, stand fast in the faith, take to you the whole armour of God, resist him, overcome him, cast him out by prayer and the blood of the Lamb; watch night and day that ye be not surprised nor seduced (as Eve was) by him, that he turn you not out of the way into paths leading to destruction, and thrust you headlong into such sins as will be a dishonour to me, a grief to my Spirit, a scandal to the church, and bitterness to your own souls. And as for me, who know your disability of yourselves to do any of these things, and so to hold out to the end, because it pleased me to love you, and set my heart upon you, having chosen you before the foundation of the world, that ye should be holy and unblamable before me in love; and having given my only Son for you, who is your peace, and through whom ye have received the atonement, with whom I will not deny you or withhold from you any thing that may safeguard your abiding with me unto salvation,—I will, through the riches of my grace, work all your works for you, fulfilling in you all the good pleasure of my goodness and the work of faith with power. I will tread down Satan, this cruel, proud, malicious, bloody, enemy of your souls, under your feet; and though at any time he foil you, yet ye shall not be cast down, for I will take you up, and will certainly preserve you by my power to the end of your hope, the salvation of your souls. Whatever betide you or befall you, I will never leave you nor forsake you. The mountains may depart, and the hills be removed, but my kindness shall never be removed from you. Comfort ye, be of good courage, and run with patience the race that is set before you." This, I say, is the language which, according to the tenor of the doctrine whose maintenance we are engaged in, God speaks to his saints and believers; and if there be folly and inconsistency found therein, let the Scriptures vindicate and plead for themselves.

For the close of this discourse of our author, charging this course of procedure with folly,—namely, to give admonition to the use of means, when the end is certainly determined to issue upon the use of those means,—he must first evince it, as to the application of it to the business in hand, before I can close with him in the managing thereof. For the present, I rather think the folly of this charge, as far as it looks towards the doctrine under consideration, to arise from other things: as,—

First, An *impertinent comparison* instituted between God and

man in their admonitions and dealings with men, as though nothing might beseem him, in spiritual things of eternal concernment, but what is squared to the rules of our proceedings one towards another in things natural or civil. And,—

Secondly, A *false supposal* that the end is promised and assured to any without or beside the use of means, or walking according to the rules, precepts, and instructions, given for that purpose, or for attainment of the end so promised. Now, what folly there is to charge men to use means for the attaining of an end, when they are, although exhorted, also assured that in their so doing they shall attain the end aimed at, is yet under contest, and may pass for the present with those other "ridiculous supposals" formerly mentioned.

But Mr Goodwin proceeds farther in the vindication of this argument, sect. 38:—

"And whereas," saith he, "they still plead, or pretend rather, that such admonitions as those lately specified may well stand with an unconditional promise of perseverance, we have formerly showed that they are not able to make good this plea, nor to give any reasonable account of it. Whereas they add, that their sense and opinion is not that it is a thing absolutely or every way impossible for true believers to fall away totally or finally from their faith, but that they willingly grant that true believers, what through their own weakness, and what through the subtle baits and temptations of Satan, may so fall away; I answer, But this is but a fig-leaf sought out to cover the nakedness of their opinion, which hath no strength at all nor weight in it; for what though it were in a thousand other respects never so possible for true believers to perish, yet if it be altogether impossible in such a respect which overrules all those others, and which will, and of necessity must, hinder the coming of it to pass, all those others notwithstanding, it is to be judged simply and absolutely impossible, and all those respects whereby it is pretended possible are not to be brought into account in such a case."

Ans. 1. Whether we are able to make good our plea concerning the consistency of admonitions with the promises of perseverance, Mr Goodwin is not the sole judge, neither do either we or our plea stand or fall at his arbitrament. What hath been lately spoken for the re-enforcement of that plea against his exceptions, he may, if he please, take time to consider.

2. For what is now added in this place as a part of that plea of ours, as it is here proposed, we own not. We do not grant that true believers may fall away, on any account whatever, totally and finally, if the expression, "May fall away," relate to the issue and event. We say, indeed, that by the temptations of Satan believers may be prevailed against to the committing of many sins, the root whereof is in themselves, whilst the lust remains in them which tempteth and

ensnareth them, whereby God may be dishonoured and their own consciences wounded,—which is a sufficient ground and bottom for all the admonitions that are given them, to beware of his deceits, to strengthen themselves against his assaults, to be built upon,—though, through the grace and faithfulness of God and his good-will, manifested and secured unto them in his covenant and promises, he can never totally prevail against them.

We say, moreover, that it is not from believers themselves, nor any thing in them, nor from any faith that they have received, that they cannot so fall finally away, there being in them a proneness to sin, and the seed of all sin still remaining, yea, a root of bitterness ready to spring up and trouble them; but from those outward principles of the will, purposes, covenant, and promises of God, which we have formerly insisted on: farther, that there is no need of granting any such possibility, taking that term as relating to the issue and event, and not the internal principle of operation in men, to manifest the harmony that is between the admonitions under consideration and the promises we have insisted on, it being sufficiently evinced on other considerations: so that Mr Goodwin's ensuing discourse concerning "absolute impossibility" is not at all related to any thing that we have asserted.

3. Neither yet doth the reason by Mr Goodwin produced in any measure evince what he intends, though *we* be not concerned therein. He will not easily persuade us that that which is possible in any respect, much less in many, and impossible only in one, is always to be judged "simply and absolutely impossible." Much less are we concerned in it, who say that simply and absolutely the falling away of believers is possible, namely, as the term "possible" relates to the principle of operation in them; but in some respect only it is impossible, that is, not of itself, but in respect of the external prohibiting cause. It was simply and absolutely possible that the bones of our Saviour should have been broken, in the nature of the thing itself; impossible, in respect of the decree of God. So are a thousand things absolutely possible in their own nature, as to the power of the causes whereby they might be produced, but impossible in respect of some external prohibiting cause;—absolutely possible in respect of their proper cause and principle; impossible in respect of the event, upon the account of some external prohibiting cause, as was showed. So it is in the business in hand. We assert not any possibility in respect of the event, as though in the issue it might so come to pass that believers should fall totally and finally from God, which is the thing we oppose; but grant it in respect of the causes of such apostasy, with reference to the nature of the thing itself, though how the possibility might be reduced into act Mr Goodwin cannot declare. As for the close of this section, concerning the *abso-*

lute, peremptory, irresistible decree of perseverance, which he ascribes to us as our assertion, when he shall have convinced us of the *conditional, non-peremptory, reversible decree* of God, which he endeavours to introduce in the place thereof, he may hear more of us; in the meantime, *μένομεν ὥσπερ ἐσμέν.*

Sect. 39, 40, he seeks to alleviate the instance commonly given of our Saviour Christ, who though assured of the end, and in respect of whom it was utterly impossible that his glorious exaltation should not follow in the issue, he being wholly out of all danger of being detained under the power of death, yet he laboured, and prayed, and fasted, and resisted Satan's temptations, and watched against him, and dealt with him by weapons taken out of the word of God; and in especial, when the devil urged him with the argument in hand, "that there is no need of means or the using of them, when there is a certainty of the end, and an impossibility that it should otherwise fall out, or the end not be brought about and accomplished," as he did when he tempted him to cast himself headlong from a pinnacle of the temple, because the angels had charge over him, that not so much as his foot should be hurt against a stone, whatever he did, as Satan intimated,—which is the tenor of the argument wherewith we have to do,—he returns to him the very answer that we insist upon, namely, that though it be the good pleasure of God to bring us to the end we aim at, yet are we not to tempt him by a neglect of the means which he hath appointed. It is true, there are arguments used to us that could have no place with Christ, being taken from the estate and condition of infirmity and weakness through sin wherein we are; which is a ground only of an inference, that if Christ, who was "holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners," did yet watch, and pray, and contend against Satan, much more should we do so. But this doth not at all take off from the parity of reason that is in the case of diligent using of the means for the compassing of the end, that in some respect is under an impossibility of not being accomplished. For the removal of this instance, Mr Goodwin enters into a large discourse of the cause and reason, vesting the Lord Christ with an immutability in good, and how it is not competent to any creature; which that it is, never entered into the thoughts of any to assert that I ever heard of, nor is it of the least importance to the removal of our instance, as to its serviceableness unto the end for which it is produced. He tells us also, "That in case men be caused necessitatingly and unavoidably to act righteously, it will take away all rewardableness from their actings; and the reason is, because such a necessitating of them makes them merely passive, they having not any internal principle of their own to contract such a necessity;" which discourse is pursued with many other words to the same purpose. And a discourse it is,—

First, Exceeding *irrelative* to the business in hand. There is not any thing now under consideration that should minister occasion at all to consider the manner of our yielding obedience, and the way of God's grace in the bringing forth the fruits thereof; but only of the consistency that is between admonitions for the using of the means, when it is supposed impossible that the end prevented by them should ever come to pass, which may or may not be so, whatever be the manner and way of our yielding obedience, upon the exertion of the efficacy of the grace of God. Diversion is one of Mr Goodwin's ordinary ways of warding those blows which he is not able to bear.

Secondly, *False,* charging a crime on the doctrine which he doth oppose whereof it is not guilty, neither it nor they that maintain it affirming that there is a necessitation upon the wills of men by the grace of God, such a necessitation as should in the least prejudice their freedom, or cause them to elicit their acts as principles natural and necessary. All the necessity ascribed by them to the efficacy of the operation of the grace of God respects only the event. They say it is necessary that the good be done which God works in us by his grace, when he works it in us; but for the manner of its doing, they say it is wrought suitably to the state and condition of the internal principle whence it is to proceed, and doth so, and of the agents whereby it is wrought, which are free. Neither do they say that good is not wrought by any native and inward principle that is in men, unless they will allow no principle to be native but what is in them by nature; and then, indeed, they say, that though *naturally* and *physically* there is, yet *morally* and *spiritually* there is not in them any *native* principle to that which is spiritually good, seeing in that sense "no good thing dwells in men." But if it may suffice to evince that they work from a native, inward principle,—that their wills, which are their natural faculties, quickened, improved, and heightened, by inward, indwelling habits of grace, properly theirs when bestowed on them, are the principles of all their actings,—then they assert them to work no less from a native, internal principle than Christ himself did. So that notwithstanding this diversion, given in to supply the absence of an answer, the instance, as to that wherein alone the parallel was intended, stands unmoved, and Mr Goodwin's whole charge of folly and inconsistency on the proceeding of the Holy Ghost falls to the ground; which is the issue of his eighth argument in this case. His last follows.

The last argument which he proposeth, sect. 41, and ends his chapter withal, is faint, and, as the droppings after a shower, will easily be blown over. He thus proposeth it:—

"That doctrine which naturally and directly tendeth to beget and foment jealousies and evil surmises between brethren in Christ, or

such as ought cordially to love, reverence, and honour one another, is not confederate with the gospel, nor from God; and consequently that which contradicteth it must needs be a truth;—the common doctrine of unquestionable and unconditional perseverance is a doctrine of this tendency, apt to beget and foment jealousies, suspicions, and evil surmises between brethren, or such as ought to love and respect one the other, as brethren in Christ: *ergo*."

Ans.—Not to take notice of any thing, by-the-by, which sundry expressions, and one inference at the least, in this argument do readily administer occasion unto, I await the proof of the minor, which in the following discourse amounts to this: "That judging all those who fall finally away not to have been true believers, we cannot but have evil surmises of all that stand that they are not true believers, seeing as good as they have fallen away; hence jealousies of their hypocrisy will arise." And he tells us, for his part he knows no Christian in the world that he hath more reason to judge a true believer than he had to judge some who are turned wretched apostates. To which I say briefly,—

1. I doubt not but Mr Goodwin knows full well that this is not a rule given us to make a judgment of believers by, with whom we walk, and towards whom it is required we bear "love without dissimulation," Rom. xii. 9,—toward such as "show us their faith by their works." Our rule of walking, from the principle of love and charity, is laid down in 1 Cor. xiii. And if all that any man knows at this day to be professors in this world should turn apostates, save only one, and he had reckoned that one and them that are apostatized, before their apostasy, of the same rank of believers, and had had no evil thoughts of that one above the rest, he was bound, without any evil surmises, "to believe all things, and to hope all things," and not to let go his sincere love towards that one, embracing of him, delighting in him, holding communion with him to his life's end, without suspicion of hypocrisy, or other hard thoughts of him, unless he also should degenerate. It is said, John ii. 23, that "many believed on Christ," because of the profession of faith that they made; and, chap. vi. 34, they pray earnestly to be fed with the bread of life, so that they were accounted among his disciples, verse 60, and yet upon a temptation they left our Saviour, and "walked no more with him," verse 66. Now, notwithstanding the profession of these men, our Saviour plainly says that they "believed not," verse 64. They falling thus away who had professed to believe, and were accounted as believers, so called and named among the disciples of Christ, and Christ declaring, on the account of their apostasy, that indeed they did never believe, how was it that the remaining twelve had not hard thoughts and jealousies one of another (especially considering that there was one hypocrite still left among them) whether they had true faith or no,

seeing our Saviour had declared that those who so fell off, as those before mentioned, had none? Doubtless they were instructed to walk by a better and a straiter rule than that Mr Goodwin here assigns to believers. Let who will or can fall away, whilst we are taught of God to love one another, and are acted by the principle of love, which "thinketh no evil," and do contend against evil surmises as the works of the flesh, there is not any thing in the least attending the discovery of one man's hypocrisy, to work us to a persuasion that another (not in any thing discovered) is so also. That because we see some goodly house fall under storms and temptations to the ground, and so manifest itself to have been built on the sand, therefore we must conclude that those which stand are not built upon the rock, is not suited to any principle or rule that our Master hath given us to walk by, in order to the exercise of that love which he calleth for in us towards one another.

2. I say this way of proceeding in our thoughts and judgments doth the Holy Ghost lead us to, 1 John ii. 19. The apostle giving an account of some who had formerly walked with him in the profession of the faith, and of the fellowship which they had with the Father and the Son, and fell away from Christ into an opposition against him, so far as to deserve the title of Antichrists, having not only forsaken the gospel, but making it also their business to oppose it, and to seduce others from the simplicity of the same;—these, he informs the scattered believers of the Jews, were apostates, having formerly walked with them, but [who had] deserted their fellowship, and thereby manifested themselves never to have been true believers, nor ever, indeed, to have had fellowship with the Father and the Son, no more than they of whom our Saviour spake in the place before mentioned; and yet, doubtless, the apostle may not be supposed to lay a foundation for jealousies, evil suspicions, and surmises among believers, though he plainly and evidently affirms that those who fall away were never true believers, and that if they had been so, they would have continued in their faith and fellowship with the people of God. "They went out from us," saith he, "but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us." A passage, by the way, clearly confirming the main of the doctrine we have hitherto insisted on; and therefore I shall turn aside, before I come to the close of this chapter, having this occasion administered, to vindicate it from the exceptions Mr Goodwin gives in against the testimony it bears in this case.

The argument that it readily furnisheth us withal is of this import: "If all they who fall away totally from the fellowship and society of the church and saints of God, whatever their profession

were before that apostasy, were never true believers, and are thereby manifested never to have been so, then those who are true believers cannot fall away; but the first is true, therefore the latter." The words are so disposed as to be cast into an hypothetical proposition, which virtually includes a double argument, as every *discreet axiom* doth;—it is not thus, therefore thus. If true believers might so depart and apostatize as those here mentioned, no unquestionable proof could be drawn from such apostasy that men were never true believers; which yet is plainly insisted on in the text.

Mr Goodwin, chap. x. sect. 21–24, pp. 189–192, gathers up sundry exceptions from the Remonstrants, which (as they also did) he opposeth to this interpretation of the words, and the inferences from them insisted on. I shall briefly consider and remove them in that order as by him they are laid down. He saith,—

First, "This inference presumeth many things, for which neither it nor any of the authors of it will ever be able to give any good security of proof; as,—

"First, That this phrase, 'They were not of us,' imports that they were never true believers. This certainly can never be proved, because there is another sense, and this every whit as proper to the words, and more commodious for the context and scope of the place, which may be given of them, as we shall see anon."

Ans. That there is not any thing presumed for the eduction of the inference proposed but what is either directly expressed or evidently included in the words of the text, will appear in the farther consideration of what Mr Goodwin hath to offer to the contrary. That expression, "They were not of us," imports evidently that they were not of them in the fellowship and communion which he was now exhorting believers to continue and abide in. He tells them at the head of this discourse, chap. i. 3, that the end of his writing to them was to draw them into, and keep them in, communion with himself and the saints with him; which communion or "fellowship," he tells them, "they had with the Father and with his Son:" but as for the persons of whom in these words he is speaking to them, describing them by their former and present condition, with the causes of it, he tells them that though they abode with them for a season, yet they were never of them as to the communion and fellowship they had with the Father and Son; and so were never true members of the church. The only reason Mr Goodwin gives to invalidate this sense of the words is, that he is able to give another meaning of them, in his own judgment, "more proper to the words and more commodious to the scope of the place;" which whether it have any more efficacy to take off the force and evidence of the interpretation given, lying plain and clear in the first view of the words and context, than it hath to evade the eduction of any truth whatever from

any place of Scripture whatever, seeing some or other suppose themselves able to give another sense of the words, let the reader judge. But he adds,—

"Secondly, That this expression, 'They were of us,' signifies that they were true believers, is presumed. Of the uncertainty of this supposition we shall," saith he, "give the like account."

Ans. When we come to take Mr Goodwin's farther account, we shall be able, I make no doubt, to reckon with him, and to discharge his bill. In the meantime, we say, that supposition, "If they had been of us" (whence our inference is made), evidently includes a fellowship and communion with the apostle and true believers in their fellowship with God; which is asserted as a certain foundation of men's abiding in the communion of the saints. But, says he,—

"Thirdly, It is supposed that these words, 'They went out from us,' signify their final defection, or abdication of the apostle's communion, or their total and final renunciation of Christ, his church, and gospel. This supposition hath no bottom at all or colour for it."

Ans. Divide not the words from their coherence and the intendment of the place, and the signification denied is too evident and clear for any one, with the least colour of reason, to rise up against it. "They went out," so out from the communion of the church, as to become antichrists, opposers of Christ, and seducers from him; and certainly in so doing did totally desert the communion of the apostle, renounce the Lord Christ as by him preached, and forsake utterly both church and gospel, as to any fellowship with the one or the other. And we know full well what is the bottom of this and the like assertions, "that such and such things have no bottom at all," which never yet failed Mr Goodwin in his need.

"Fourthly," saith he, "It is supposed that this clause, 'They would no doubt have continued with us,' signifies They would have continued in the same faith wherein we persevere and continue. Nor is there," saith he, "any competent reason to enforce this sense of those words, because neither doth the grammatical tenor of them require it, and much less the scope of the passage."

Ans. The fellowship John invited believers unto, and to continue in (as hath often been observed), with him and the saints, was that which they held with the Father and the Son. To continue with them therein, in the literal, grammatical sense of the words, is to continue in the faith, it being faith whereby they have that fellowship or communion. This also is evident from the scope of the whole passage, and is here only impotently denied. But, saith he,—

"Fifthly, The said inference supposeth that John certainly knew that all those who for the present remained in his communion were true believers; for if they were not true believers, they that were

gone out from them, in the sense contended for, might be said to be 'of them,' that is, persons of the same condition with them. But how improbable this is, I mean that John should infallibly know that all those who as yet continued with them were true believers, I refer to consideration."

Ans. Had Mr Goodwin a little poised this passage before he took it up, perhaps he would have cast it away as a useless trifle; but, his masters having insisted on it, perhaps he thought it not meet to question their judgments in the least, for fear of being at liberty to deal so with them in matters of greater importance. I say, then, that there is not the least colour for any such supposal from the inference we make from the text, nor is there any thing of that nature intimated or suggested in the words, or argument from them. The body of them whom the apostates forsook were true believers, and their abiding in the fellowship of the saints was a manifestation of it, sufficient for them to be owned as such, which the others manifested themselves never to have been, by their apostasy. But, saith he,—

"Sixthly, The inference under contest yet farther supposeth that John certainly knew that they who were now gone out from them neither were now, nor ever were before, true believers; yea, and that he certainly knew this by their departure or going out from them."

Ans. This is the very thing that the apostle affirms, that he certainly knew those apostates never to have been true believers, and that by their apostasy or falling totally from the gospel, becoming seducers and opposers of Christ. Let him argue it out with the Holy Ghost if he can, whose plain and clear expression this is, and that confirmed by the ensuing argument of the perseverance of them who were true believers, and whose fellowship is with the saints, in their communion with the Father and the Son. Wherefore, saith he,—

"Lastly, It presumeth yet farther, that all true believers do always abide in the external communion of the church; and that when men do not so abide, they plainly declare herein that they never were true believers; which is not only a manifest untruth, but expressly contrary to the doctrine itself of those men who assert the inference; for they teach (as we heard before) that a true believer may fall so foully and so far, that the church, according to the command of Christ, may be constrained to testify that she cannot tolerate them in her external communion, nor that ever they shall have any part or portion in the kingdom of Christ, unless they repent. Doubtless, to be cast out of the church, according to the institution and command of Christ (who commands no such thing but upon very heinous and high unchristian misdemeanours), is of every whit as sad importance as a voluntary desertion of the church's communion can be for a season."

Ans. It supposeth that no true believers fall so off from the church as to become antichrists, opposers of Christ and the church, so as to deny that Christ is come in the flesh; which was the great business of the antichrists in those days. It is true, and granted by us, that a true believer may forsake the outward communion of some particular church for a season; yea, and that upon his irregular walking, and not according to the rule of Christ, he may, by the authority of such a church, be rejected from its communion, for his amendment and recovery into the right way (of which before): but that a true believer can voluntarily desert the communion of the saints, and become an antichrist, that this text denies, and we from it, and the many other witnesses of the same truth that have been produced.

Notwithstanding, then, all Mr Goodwin's exceptions, there is nothing presumed in the inference we make from these words, but what is either expressly contained or evidently included in them.

But Mr Goodwin will not thus give over. He prefers his exceptions to this testimony in another whole section; which, because the demonstration of the truth in hand from this place, though here handled by-the-by, is of great importance, and such as by its single strength is sufficient utterly to cast to the ground the figment set up in opposition to it, I shall present entirely to the reader, that our author may be heard out, and nothing omitted that he pleads for the waiving of the force of the argument in hand in that whole section. Thus, then, he proceeds:—

"Suppose that these two suppositions be granted to the inference makers, first, that this phrase, 'To go out from us,' signifies voluntarily to forsake the society and communion of Christians; and, secondly, that this expression, 'To be of us,' signifies true and inward communion with those from whom they went out; yet will not these contributions suffice for the firm building of the said inference. The reason is, because the apostle expressly saith that 'They would have continued with us;' not that they would have continued such as they were, in respect of the truth or essence of their faith. And if the apostle's scope in this place were to prove or affirm that they who are once true Christians, or believers, always continue such, then, when he saith 'They would have continued with us,' he must of necessity mean either that 'They would have continued faithful as we continue faithful,' or else that 'They would have continued always in our society, or in the profession of Christianity.' But that neither of these senses is of any tolerable consistency is evident by the light of this consideration, namely, that the apostle then must have known that the persons he speaks of, and who went out from them, neither were nor ever had been true Christian believers, when they went thus from them. Now, if he had this knowledge of them, it must be supposed either that he had it by extraordinary revela-

tion (but this is very improbable, and howsoever cannot be proved), or else that he gained and obtained it by their departure or going out from them: but that this could be no sufficient argument or ground to beget any such knowledge in the apostle concerning them is evident from hence, because it may very easily, and doth very frequently, come to pass that they who are true Christians do not always continue in the society to which they have joined themselves, no, nor yet in the external profession of Christianity itself; yea, our opposers themselves frequently, and without scruple, teach that even true believers themselves may, through fear, or shame, or extremity of sufferings, be brought to deny Christ, and, without any danger of being shipwrecked of their faith, forbear making a profession of the name of Christ afterward."

Ans. 1. What is meant and intended by these expressions, "Went out from us," and "To be of us," hath been declared. We are not to teach the Holy Ghost to speak. Whatever conceit we may have of our own abilities, when we deal with worms of the earth like ourselves, to his will, to his expressions, we must vail and submit. He is pleased to phrase their continuance in the faith, their "Continuance with us;" that is, with the saints in the fellowship and communion of the gospel, which they had with God in Christ. The expression is clear and evident to the purpose in hand, and there is no contending against it.

2. We do not say that it is the direct scope and intent of the apostle in this place to prove that those who are true believers cannot fall away and depart from the faith,—which he afterward doth to the purpose, chap. iii. 9; but his mind and intendment was, to manifest that those who forsake the society of Christians, and become antichrists and seducers, were indeed never true believers, using the other hypothesis as a medium for the confirmation of this assertion.

3. By that phrase, "They would have continued with us," the apostle intends their continuance in the society and fellowship of the faithful, by the profession of Jesus Christ, whom now they opposed, denying him to be come in the flesh; that is, They would not have so fallen off as they have done, upon the account of the estate and condition of true believers and real saints, who are kept by the power of God to salvation.

4. The apostle did know, and professed himself to know, that they were not, nor ever had been, true believers, when they were once so gone out from them as they went; as our Saviour Christ professed them not to have been true believers who followed him for a while, and were called and accounted his disciples, when they fell in an hour of temptation. Neither have we the least reason to suppose that the apostle had this knowledge by revelation, seeing the

thing itself, in reference and proportion to the principles he lays down of the continuance of believers, did openly proclaim it.

5. That true Christians, or believers, can so fall away from the society of the saints as those here mentioned did, is denied, and a grant of it ought not to be begged at our hands. It is true that (as was before granted) a true believer may for a season desert the communion or fellowship of a church wherein he hath walked, and that causelessly; yea, he may be surprised through infirmity to deny, under mighty temptations, in words, for a moment, the Lord Christ, whom yet his heart loves and honours, as in the case of Peter was too evident: but that such an one may forsake the external profession of Christianity, or cease *profession-making,* and betake himself to a contrary interest, opposing Christ and his ways, as those here insisted on did, that is denied, and not the least attempt of proof made to the contrary.

Whilst I was upon consideration of these exceptions of Mr Goodwin's to our testimony from this text of Scripture by us insisted on, there came to my hands his exposition on the 9th chapter to the Romans; in the epistle whereof to the reader he is pleased, sect. 6, studiously to waive the imputation of having borrowed this exposition from Arminius and his followers,—an apology perhaps unworthy his prudence and great abilities; which testimony yet, I fear, by having cast an eye on the body of the discourse, will scarcely be received by his reader without the help of that vulgar proverb, "Good wits jump." But yet on this occasion I cannot but say, however he hath dealt in that treatise, this discourse I have under consideration is purely translated from them,—the condition of very much of what hath been already considered being the same; which I had then thought to have manifested by placing their Latin against his English in the margin. But these things are personal, not belonging to the cause in hand. Mr Goodwin is sufficiently known to have abilities of his own, such as wherewith he hath done, in sundry particulars, considerable service to the truth,—as sometimes they have been unhappily engaged in ways of a contrary nature and tendency.

It being evident, from these considerations, that our author is not able in the least to take off this witness from speaking home to the very heart of the cause in hand, that it may not seem to be weakened and impaired by him in the least, I shall farther consider that diversion which he would entice the words unto from their proper channel and intendment, and so leave the apostasy of the saints dead at the foot of it. He gives us, then, sect. 23, 24, an exposition of this place of Scripture, upon the rack whereof it seems not to speak what formerly we received from its mouth. For the occasion of the words, he says,—

"For the true meaning of this place, it is to be considered that

the apostle's intent in the words was, to prevent or heal an offence that weak Christians might take by the doctrine which was taught and spread abroad by those antichrists or antichristian teachers spoken of in the former verse (and they are said to have been many); and that especially because they had sometimes lived and conversed with the apostles themselves in Christian churches, and had professed the same faith and doctrine with them. By reason hereof, some Christians, not so considerate or judicious as others, might possibly think or conceive that surely all things were not well with the apostles and those Christian societies with which they consorted,—that there was something not as it ought to have been, either in doctrine or manners, or both, which ministered an occasion to these men to break communion with them and to leave them."

Ans. 1. The intendment of the apostle in the context is evidently to caution believers against seducers; acquainting them also with the sweet and gracious provision that God had made for their preservation, in the abiding, teaching, anointing, bestowed on them. In the verse under present consideration he gives them a description of the persons that did seduce them, in respect of their present state and condition. They were apostates, who, though they had some time made profession of the faith, yet indeed were never true believers, nor had had any fellowship with Jesus Christ, as he and the saints had; which also they had abundantly manifested by their open apostasy, and ensuing opposition to the doctrine of the gospel and the eternal life manifested therein.

2. That any Christians whatsoever, from the consideration of these seducers falling away, did entertain any suspicion that all things were not well in that society of which the apostle speaks (not with the "apostles," which were all dead, himself only excepted, when John wrote this epistle), either as to doctrine or manners, so supposing them to take part with the apostates in their departure, is a surmise whereunto there is not any thing in the least contributed in the text or context, nor any thing like to it, being a mere invention of our author, found out to serve his turn, and confidently, without any induction looking that way or attempt of proof, imposed upon his credulous reader. If men may assume to themselves a liberty of creating occasions of words, discourses, or expressions in the Scripture, no manner of way insinuated nor suggested therein, they may wrest it to what they please, and confirm whatever they have a mind unto.

This false foundation being laid, he proceeds to build upon it; and, suitably thereunto, feigns the apostle to speak what never entered into his heart, and unto that whereof he had no occasion administered:—

"To this," saith he, "the apostle answereth partly by concession,

partly by exception. First, by concession, in these words, 'They went out from us;' which words do not so much import their utter declining or forsaking the apostles' communion, as the advantage or opportunity which they had to gain credit and respect both to their doctrine and persons among professors of Christianity in the world, inasmuch as they came forth from the apostles themselves, as men sent and commissioned by them to teach. The same phrase is used in this sense, and with the same import, where the apostles write thus to the brethren of the Gentiles: Acts xv. 24, 'Forasmuch as we have heard, that certain which went out from us have troubled you with words, subverting your souls, saying, Ye must be circumcised, and keep the law: to whom we gave no such commandment.' So that in this clause, 'They went out from us,' the apostle grants, *first*, That those antichristian teachers had indeed for a time held communion with them; and *secondly*, That hereby they had the greater opportunity of doing harm in the world by their false doctrines. But secondly, he answers farther by way of exception, 'But they were not of us;'—'Whilst yet they conversed with us, they were not men of the same spirit and principles with us. We walked in the profession of the gospel with single and upright hearts, not aiming at any singular greatness or worldly accommodations in one kind or other; these men loved this present world, and when they found the simplicity of the gospel would not accommodate them to their minds, they brake with us and with the truth of the gospel itself at once.'"

Ans. 1. I suppose it is evident, at the first view, that this new gloss on the apostle's words is inconsistent with that which was proposed for the occasion of them in the words foregoing. There, an aspersion is said to be cast upon the churches and societies whereof the apostle speaks, from the departure of these seducers from them, as though they were not sound in faith or manners; here, an insinuation quite of another tendency is suggested,—as though these persons found countenance in their teachings and seductions from the society and communion which they had had with the apostles,—as though they had pretended to come from them by commission, and so, instead of casting reproach upon them by their departure, did assume authority to themselves by their having been with them. But to the thing itself I say,—

2. That the apostle is not answering any objection, but describing the state and condition of the antichrists and seducers, concerning whom and their seduction he cautioneth believers, hath been formerly, beyond contradiction, manifested and maintained. That expression, then, "They went out from us," is not an answer, "by concession," to an objection, but a description of seducers by their apostasy; which words, also, in their regard to the persons as before

by him described, do manifest their utter declining and forsaking the communion of the saints, they so going from them as also to go into an opposition to the doctrine of the gospel.

3. That the apostle here insinuates an advantage these antichrists had to seduce, from their former communion with him (a thing not in the least suggested, as was observed, in the occasion of the words as laid down by Mr Goodwin himself), is proved from the use of the words, "They went out from us," Acts xv. 24; whence this undeniable argument may be educed, "Some who went out from the apostles had repute and authority in their preaching thereby; these antichrists went out from the apostle: therefore they had repute and authority thereby!" Younger men than either Mr Goodwin or myself know well enough what to make of this argument. Besides, though there be an agreement in that one expression, all the neighbouring parts of the description manifest that in the things themselves there and here pointed at there is no affinity. Those in the Acts pretended to abide still in the "communion and faith of the apostles;" these here expressly departed both from the one and the other, to an opposition of them both. The former seemed to have pretended a commission from the apostles; these, according to Mr Goodwin himself, did so far declare against them that it was "a scandal to some, fearing that all had not been well among the apostles."

4. That which is called "an answer by way of exception," as it lies, the expression of it so used upon the matter is as much as we urge from these words. The import of them is said to be, "'They were not of us.' Though they were with us, yet they were not such as we are, did not walk in that uprightness of heart as we do; they were not men of the same principles and spirit with us;"—that is, they were not true, thorough, sincere, and sound believers at all, no, not while they conversed with the apostle. Now, evident it is that in those words,—as is manifest by the resuming of them again for the use of an inference ensuing, "For if they had been of us, they would have continued with us,"—the apostle yields a reason and account how they came to apostatize and fall to the opposition of the gospel from the profession wherein they walked; it was because they were not men of thorough and sound principles, true believers: and consequently he supposeth and implieth that if they had been so, they would not, they could not, have so apostatized; for if they might, there had been no weight in the account given of the reason of their revolt.

In what follows, "That these words, 'But they were not of us,' do not necessarily imply they were believers formerly, but perhaps they had been so, and were before fallen away, being choked by the cares of the world," an observation is insinuated directly opposite to the apostle's design, and such as makes his whole discourse ridiculous.

An account he gives of men's falling away from the faith, and he tells them it is because, though they had been professors, yet they were never true believers. "Yea, but perhaps they were true believers and then fell away, and after that fell away;"—that is, they fell from the faith, and then fell from the faith; for that is plainly intimated in and is the sense of this doughty observation.

But to proceed with his exposition, he says, "It follows, 'For if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us.' In these words the apostle gives a reason of his exception, telling them to whom he writes that this was a sign and argument that those antichristian teachers were not of them in the sense declared, namely, that they did not continue with them; that is, they quitted their former intimacy and converse with the apostles, refused to steer the same course, to walk by the same principles, any longer with them: 'which,' saith he, 'doubtless they would not have done had they been as sincerely affected towards Jesus Christ and the gospel as we.' By which assertion John plainly vindicated himself and the Christian churches of his communion from giving any just occasion of offence unto those men, whereby they should be any ways induced to forsake them, and resolves their unworthy departure of this kind into their own carnal and corrupt hearts, which lusted after some fleshly accommodations and contentments that were not to be obtained or enjoyed in a sincere profession of the gospel with the apostles, and those who were perfect of heart with them."

Ans. First, that no aspersion was cast on John or the "churches of his communion" by the apostasy of the antichrists of whom he speaks, from which he should need to vindicate himself and them, was before declared. There was not, indeed, nor possibly could be, the least occasion for any surmise of evil concerning them from whom men departed in turning ungodly opposers of Christ. For any thing that is here offered, it is but an obscuring of the light that breaks forth from the words for the discerning of the truth in hand. It is granted that the apostle manifests that "they were not of them,"—that is, true, upright, sound believers, that walked with a right foot in the doctrine of the gospel,—because they forsook the communion of the saints to fall into the condition of antichristianism, wherein they were now engaged. Now, if this be an argument that a man was never a true believer, in the highest profession that he makes, because he falls from it and forsakes it, certainly those that are true believers cannot so fall from their steadfastness, or the argument will be of no evidence or conviction at all; neither is any thing here offered by Mr Goodwin but what, upon a thorough consideration, doth confirm the inferences we insist upon, and make to the work in hand. Truth will, at one time or other, lead captive those who are most skilful in their rebellion against it.

What is added, sect. 24, concerning the righteous judgment of God, and the gracious tendency of his dispensations to his church's use, in suffering these wretches so to discover themselves, and to manifest what they were, I oppose not. The discovery that was made was of what they had been before,—that is, not true believers, —and not what now they were; yea, by what they now showed themselves to be was made manifest what before they were. Words of the like import you have, 1 Cor. xi. 19, "For there must be also heresies among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you." As here those who fall away are manifested to be corrupt, so there those who abide are to be sincere.

From what hath been occasionally spoken of the intendment and scope of this place, of the design which the apostle had in hand, of the direct sense of the words themselves,—Mr Goodwin's exceptions to our interpretation of the words and inferences from it being wholly removed, and his exposition, which he advanceth in the room of that insisted on, manifested to be, as to the occasion and scope of the place assigned, utterly foreign unto it, and, as to explication of the particulars of it, not of any strength or consistency for the obscuring of the true sense and meaning of the place, in the eye of an intelligent reader,—it is evidently concluded, beyond all colourable contradiction, that those who are true believers indeed, having obtained communion with the Father and his Son Jesus Christ, cannot fall into a total relinquishment of Christ or of the faith of the gospel, so as to have no portion nor interest in the communion they formerly enjoyed.

To return to Mr Goodwin's close of this 13th chapter, and "nine arguments," as he calls them, from which he labours to evince the apostasy of believers, he shuts up the whole with a declamation against and reviling of the doctrine he opposeth, with many opprobrious and reproachful expressions, calling it "an impostor, and an appearance of Satan in the likeness of an angel of light," with such like terms of reproach as his rhetoric at every turn is ready to furnish him withal, threatening it farther with calling it in question before I know not how many learned men of all sorts, and to disprove it by their testimony concerning it; and so all that is required for its destruction is, or shall be, speedily despatched! God knows how to defend his truth; and as he hath done this in particular against as fierce assaults as any Mr Goodwin hath made or is like to make against it, so I no way doubt he will continue to do. It is not the first time that it hath been conformable to its Author, in undergoing the contradiction of men, and being laden with reproaches, and crucified among the thievish principles of error and profaneness. Hitherto it hath not wanted, in due time, its resurrection, and that continually with a new glory and an added estimation to what be-

fore it obtained among the saints of God; and I no way doubt but that it will grow more and more until the perfect day, when those opinions and inventions of men, derogatory to the grace and covenant of God, his truth, unchangeableness, and faithfulness, which now make long their shades to eclipse the beauty and lustre of it, shall consume and vanish away before its brightness;—in which persuasion I doubt not but the reader will be confirmed with me, upon the farther consideration of what Mr Goodwin's endeavours are in opposition hereto, wherewith now, by the grace of God, contrary to my first intendment, I shall proceed.

CHAPTER XVII.

A REVIEW OF PASSAGES IN SCRIPTURE ADDUCED TO PROVE THE APOSTASY OF SAINTS.

The cause of proceeding in this chapter—Mr G.'s attempt, chap. xii. of his book—Of the preface to Mr G.'s discourse—Whether doctrine renders men proud and presumptuous—Mr G.'s rule of judging of doctrines called to the rule—Doctrine pretending to promote godliness, how far an argument of the truth—Mr G.'s pretended advantages in judging of truths examined—The first, of his knowledge of the general course of the Scriptures—Of the experience of his own heart—And his observations of the ways of others—Of his rational abilities—Ezek. xviii. 24, 25, proposed to consideration—Mr G.'s sense of this place—The words opened—Observations for the opening of the text—The words farther weighed—An entrance into the answer to the argument from hence—The words hypothetical, not absolute—Mr G.'s answer proposed and considered—Whether the words are hypothetical—The severals of the text considered—The "righteous man" spoken of, whom—Mr G.'s proof of his interpretation of a "righteous man" considered—Dr Prideaux's sense of the righteous person here intended considered—Of the commination in the words, "Shall die"—The sense of the words—What death intended—Close of the consideration of the text insisted on—Matt. xviii. 32–35, taken into a review—Whether the love of God be mutable—What the love of God is—1 Cor. ix. 27; in what sense it was possible for Paul to become a reprobate—The proper sense of the place insisted on manifested—Of the meaning of the word ἀδόκιμος—The scope of the place farther cleared—Heb. vi. 4–8, x. 26–29, proposed to consideration—Whether the words be conditional—The genuine and true meaning of the place opened in six observations—Mr G.'s exceptions to the exposition of the words insisted on removed—The persons intended not true believers—This evinced in sundry considerations—The particulars of the text vindicated—Of the illumination mentioned in the text—Of the acknowledgment of the truth ascribed to the persons mentioned—Of the sanctification mentioned in the text—Of tasting the heavenly gift—To be made partakers of the Holy Ghost, what—Of tasting the good word of God and powers of the world to come—Of the progress made by men not really regenerate in the things of God—The close of our considerations on these texts—Heb. x. 38, 39—Mr G.'s arguing from thence considered and answered—Of the

right translation of the words—Beza vindicated, as also our English translators—The words of the text effectual to prove the saints' perseverance—Of the parable of the stony ground, Matt. xiii. 20, 21—Mr G.'s arguing from the place proposed and considered—The similitude in the parable farther considered—An argument from the text to prove the persons described not to be true believers—2 Pet. ii. 18–22—Mr G.'s arguings from this place considered, etc.

THOUGH I could willingly be spared the labour of all that must ensue to the end of this treatise, yet, it being made necessary by the endeavours of men not delighting in the truth which hitherto we have asserted for the opposition thereof, and lying, I hope, under the power and efficacy of that heavenly exhortation of "contending earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints," I shall with all cheerfulness address myself thereunto; yea, the service and homage I owe to the truth itself, causing this engagement for its rescue from under the captivity wherein by the chains of Mr Goodwin's rhetoric it hath been some time detained, being increased and doubled by the pressing and violent wresting of sundry texts of Scripture to serve in the same design of bondaging the truth with him, is a farther incitation to add my weak endeavours to break open those doors and bars which he hath shut and fastened upon them both, for their joint deliverance.

In Mr Goodwin's 12th chapter, he takes into participation with him, as is pretended, eight places of Scripture, endeavouring by all means possible to compel them to speak comfortable words for the relief of his fainting and dying cause. Whether he hath prevailed with them to the least compliance, or whether he will not be found to proclaim in their name what they never once acknowledged unto him, will be tried out in the process of our consideration of them.

In the first and second sections he fronts the discourse intended with an eloquent oration, partly concerning the tendency of the doctrine of the saints' perseverance, which he girds himself now more closely to contend withal, partly concerning himself, his own ability, industry, skill, diligence, and observation of doctrines and persons, with his rules in judging of the one and the other.

For the first, he informs us that his judgment is, "That many who might have attained a 'crown of glory,' by a presumptuous conceit of the impossibility of their miscarrying, are now like to 'suffer the vengeance of eternal fire;' men thereby gratifying the flesh with wresting the Scriptures to the encouragement thereof."

That the proud and presumptuous conceits of men are like to have no other issue or effect than the betraying of their souls to all manner of looseness and abominations, so exposing them to the "vengeance of eternal fire," we are well assured; and therefore, "knowing the terror of the Lord, we do persuade men," what we are able, to cast down all high thoughts and imaginations concerning their own abilities to

do good, to believe, to obey the gospel, or to abide in the faith thereof, and to roll themselves freely, fully, wholly, on the free grace and faithfulness of God in the covenant of mercy, ratified in the blood of his Son, wherein they shall be assured to find peace to their souls. On this foundation do we build all our endeavours for the exalting the sovereign, free, effectual grace of God, in opposition to the proud and presumptuous conceits of men concerning their own inbred, native power in spiritual things,—an apprehension whereof, we are well assured, disposeth the heart into such a frame as God abhors, and prepares the soul to a battle against him, in the highest and most abominable rebellion imaginable. I no ways doubt that the ways and means whereby innumerable poor creatures have been hardened to their eternal ruin have had all their springs and fountains lie in this one wretched reserve, of a power in themselves to turn to God and to abide with him. That any one by mixing the promises of God with faith, wherein the Lord hath graciously assured him, that, seeing he hath no strength in himself to continue in his mercy, he will preserve and keep him in and through the Son of his love, hath ever been, or ever can be, turned wholly aside to any way or path not acceptable to God, or not ending in everlasting peace, will never be made good, whilst the gospel of Christ finds honour and credit amongst any of the sons of men. There may be some, indeed, who are strangers to the covenant of promise, whatever they do pretend, who may turn this grace of God in the gospel, as also that of the satisfaction of Christ, redemption by his blood, and justification by faith, the whole doctrine of the covenant of grace in Christ, into lasciviousness. But shall their unbelief make the faith of God of none effect? shall their wickedness and rebellion prejudice the mercy, peace, and consolation of the saints? Because the gospel is to them the "savour of death unto death," may it not be the "savour of life unto life" unto them that do embrace it? Whatever, then, be the disasters of men (of which themselves are the sole cause) with their presumptuous conceits of the impossibility of miscarrying,—seeing every presumptuous conceit, of what kind soever, is a desperate miscarriage,—their ruin and destruction cannot in the least be ascribed to that doctrine which calls for faith in the promises of God, a faith working by love, and decrying all presumptuous conceits whatever; a doctrine without which, and the necessary concomitant doctrines thereof, the whole bottom of men's walking with God, and of their obedience, is nothing but presumption and conceit, whereby, setting aside the cold fits they are sometimes cast into by the checks of their consciences, they spend their days in the distemper of a fever of pride and folly.

In the ensuing discourse, Mr Goodwin informs us of these two things:—First, What rule he proceeds by in judging of the truth of

contrary opinions, when, as he phraseth it, "the tongue of the Scripture seems to be cloven about them." And, Secondly, Of his own advantages and abilities to make a right judgment according to that rule. The rule he attends unto, upon the information he hath given us, is, "The consideration of which of the opinions that are at any time rivals for his judgment and acceptation tends most unto godliness, the gospel being the truth which is according to godliness." Of his own advantages and abilities to make a right judgment according to this rule, there are several heads and springs; as, "his knowledge of the general course of the Scripture, the experience of his own heart, his long observation of the spirits and ways of men, but chiefly that light of reason and understanding which he hath." And by this rule, with these abilities, proceeding in the examination of the doctrine of the saints' perseverance, he condemns it, and casts it out as an abominable thing, preferring that concerning their final defection far above it. Some considerations I shall add to attend upon his rule and principles:—

First, it is most certain that the gospel is a "doctrine according unto godliness," whose immediate and direct tendency, as in the whole frame and course of it, so in every particular branch and stream, is to promote that obedience to God in Christ which we call godliness. "This is the will of God," revealed therein, "even our sanctification." And whatever doctrine it be that is suited to turn men off from walking with God in that way of holiness, it carries its brand on its face, whereby every one that finds it may know that it is of the unclean spirit, the evil one. But yet that there may be fearful and desperate deceits in the hearts of men judging of truths, pretending their rise and original from the gospel by their suitableness to the promotion of godliness and holiness, hath been before in part declared, and the experience of all ages doth sufficiently manifest. Among all those who profess the name of Christ more or less in the world, though in and under the most antichristian opposition to him, who is there that doth not pretend that this tendency of opinions unto godliness, or their disserviceableness thereunto, hath a great influence into the guidance of their judgment in the receiving or rejecting of them? On the account of its destructiveness to godliness and obedience do the Socinians reject the satisfaction and merit of Christ; and on the account of conducingness thereunto do the Papists assert and build up the doctrines of their own merits, penance, satisfaction, and the like. On that principle did they seem to be acted who pressed legal and judicial suppositions, with "a show of wisdom in will-worship, and humility, and neglecting of the body," Col. ii. 23. Neither did they fail of their plea concerning promotion of godliness in the worship of God, who reviled, rejected, and persecuted the ordinances of Christ in this generation, to set up their

own abominations in their room. Yea, it is generally the first word wherewith every abomination opens its mouth in the world, though the men of those abominations do rather suppose this pretence of godliness to be serviceable for the promotion of their opinions than their opinions any way really useful to the promotion of godliness.

Neither need we go far to inquire after the reasons of men's miscarriages, pretending to judge of truth according to this rule, seeing they lie at hand, and are exposed to the view of all; for besides that very many of the pretenders to this plea may be justly suspected to be men of corrupt minds, dealing falsely and treacherously with their own souls and the truth,—the pretence of furthering holiness being one of the cunning sleights wherewith they lie in wait to deceive, which may justly be suspected of them who, together with this plea, and whilst they make it, are apparently themselves loose and remote from the power of a gospel conversation, as the case hath been with not a few of the most eminent assertors of Arminianism,—how few are there in the world who have indeed a true notion and apprehension of the nature of holiness in its whole compass and extent, as in the fountain, causes, rise, use, and end thereof! And if men know not indeed what holiness is, how shall they judge what doctrine or opinion is conducing to the furtherance thereof or is obstructive to it?

Give me a man who is persuaded that he hath *power in himself*, being by the discovery of a rule directed thereunto, to yield that obedience to God which he doth require; who supposeth that threats of hell and destruction are the greatest and most powerful and effectual motive unto that obedience; that the Spirit and grace of God to work and create a new heart in him, as a suitable principle of all holy actings, are not purchased nor procured for him by the blood of Christ, nor is there any holiness wrought in him by the almighty efficacy of that Spirit and grace, he having a sufficiency in himself for these things; that there is not a real physical concurrence of the grace of God for the production of every good act whatever; and that he is justified upon the account of any act or part of his obedience or of the whole,—and I shall not be much moved or shaken with the judgment of that man concerning the serviceableness and suitableness of any doctrine or doctrines to the furtherance of godliness and holiness. There are also many different opinions about the nature of godliness, what it is, and wherein it doth consist. I desire to be informed how a man may be directed in his examination of those opinions, supposing him in a strait and exigency of thoughts between them, in considering which of them is best suited to the promotion of godliness. I do not intend in the least to derogate from the certain and undoubted truth of what was premised at the beginning of this discourse, namely, "That every gos-

pel rule whatever is certainly conducing to the furtherance of gospel obedience in them that receive it in the love and power thereof," every error being in its utmost activity (especially in corrupting the principles of it) obstructive thereunto; much less do we in any measure decline the trial of the doctrine which I assert, in opposition to [the doctrine of] the apostasy of the saints, by this touchstone of its usefulness to holiness, having formerly manifested its eminent activity and efficacy in that service, and the utter averseness of its corrival to lend any assistance thereunto. But yet I say, in an inquiry after and dijudication of truth, whatever I have been or may be straitened between different persuasions, I have [chosen], and shall rather choose, in the practice of holiness, in prayer, faith, and waiting upon God, to search the Scripture, to attend wholly to that rule, having plentiful promises for guidance and direction, than to weigh in any rational consideration of my own what is conducing to holiness, what not, especially in many truths which have their usefulness in this service (as is the case of most gospel ordinances and institutions of worship), not from the connection of things, but from the mere will of the Appointer. Of those doctrines, I confess, which, following on to know the Lord, we know from his word to be from him, and which in doing the will of Christ are revealed to us to be his will, a peculiar valuation is to be set on the head of them which appear to be peculiarly and eminently serviceable to the promotion and furthering of our obedience; as also, that all opinions whatever that are in the least seducers from the power, truth, and spirituality of obedience, are not of God, and are *eo nomine* to be rejected: yet, having a more sure rule to attend unto, I dare not make my apprehensions concerning the tendency of doctrines any rule, if God hath not so spoken of them, for the judging of their truth or falsehood, if my thoughts are not shut up and determined by the power of the word.

The next proposal made by Mr Goodwin is of the advantages he hath to judge of truths; which he hath done unto plenary satisfaction, according to the rule now considered. The first thing he offereth to induce us to close with him in his judgment of opinions is, "the knowledge he hath of the general course of the Scripture." What is intended by "the general course of the Scripture" well I know not; and so I am not able to judge of Mr Goodwin's knowledge thereof by any thing exposed to public view. If by "the general course of the Scriptures" the matter of them is intended, the importance of the expression seems to be coincident with the "analogy or proportion of faith," a safe rule of prophecy;—but whatever Mr Goodwin's knowledge may be of this, I am not perfectly satisfied that he hath kept close unto it in many doctrines of his book entitled "Redemption Redeemed;" and so the weight of his skill in judging of truths on this foundation will not balance what I have to lay against it for the

inducement of other thoughts than those of closing with him. The "course of the Scripture" cannot import the manner of the expressions therein used, in that there is so great and so much variety therein that it can scarce be cast into one course and current; and if the general scope, aim, and tendency of the Scripture may pass for the "course of it," there is not any one thing that lies so evident and clear therein as the decrying of all that ability, and strength, and power to do good in men, which Mr Goodwin so much pleads for and asserts to be in them, with an exaltation of that rich and free grace, in the efficacy and the power of it, which he so much opposeth.

The "experimental knowledge he hath of his own heart, the workings and reasonings thereof," a thing common to him with others, and what advantages he hath thereby, I shall not consider; only, this I shall dare to say, that I would not for all the world have no experience in my heart of the truth of many things which Mr Goodwin in this treatise opposeth, or that my weak experience of the grace of God should not rise above that frame of heart and spirit which the teachings of it seem to discover. I doubt not, a person under the covenant of works, heightened with convictions, and a low or common work of the Spirit, induced thereby to some regular walking before God, may reach the utmost of what in this treatise is required to render a man a saint, truly gracious, regenerate, and a believer.

And in this also, I doubt not, lies the deceit of what is thirdly insisted on, namely, "his observation of the ways and spirits of men, their firstings and lastings in religion." A sort of men there are in the world who escape the outward pollution of it, and are clean in their own eyes, though they are never washed from their iniquities; who having been under strong convictions by the power of the law, and broken [off] thereby from the course of their sin, attending to the word of the gospel with a temporary faith, do go forth unto a profession of religion and walking with God so far as to have "all the lineaments of true believers," as Mr Goodwin somewhere speaks, "drawn in their faces,"—hearing the word gladly, as did Herod; receiving it with joy, as did the stony ground; attending to it with delight, as they did in Ezek. xxxiii. 31; repenting of former sins, as did Ahab and Judas; until they are reckoned among true believers, as was Judas and those in John ii. 23, who yet were never united unto Jesus Christ; —of whose ways and walking Mr Goodwin seems to have made observation, and found many of them to end in visible apostasy. But that this observation of them should cause him to judge them, when apostatized, to have been true believers, or that he is thereby advantaged to determine concerning the truth of several opinions pretending to his acceptance, I cannot grant, nor doth he go about to prove.

For what he mentions in the last place, of the "light of reason and understanding" which he hath, I do not only grant him to have it "in

common," as he saith, "with other men," for the kind of it, but also, as to the degrees of it, to be much advanced therein above the generality of men; yet I must needs tell him, in the close, that all these helps and advantages, seeming to be drawn forth and advanced in opposition to that one great assistance, which we enjoy by promise of Christ, of his Spirit leading us into all truth, and teaching us from God by his own anointing, are to me "hay and stubble," yea, "loss and dung," —of no value or esteem. Had we not other ways and means, helps and advantages, to come to the knowledge of the truth, than these here unfolded and spread forth by Mr Goodwin, *actum esset*, we should never perceive the things that are of God. The fox was acquainted with many wiles and devices; the cat knew *unum magnum*, wherein she found safety. Attendance to the word, according to the direction of the usual known rules and helps agreed on for the interpretation of it, with humble dependence on God; waiting for the guidance of his Spirit, according to the promise of his dear Son; asking him of him continually, that he may dwell with us, anoint, and lead us into all truth; with an utter abrenunciation of all our skill, abilities, wisdom, and any resting on them, knowing that it is God alone that gives us understanding,—is the course that hitherto hath been used in our inquiry after the mind of God in the doctrine under consideration, and which, the Lord assisting, shall be heeded and kept close unto in that discussion of the texts of Scripture wrested by Mr Goodwin, as by others before him, to give countenance to his opposition to the truth hitherto uttered, confirmed, and vindicated from his contradictions thereunto.

The place of Scripture first insisted on, and on the account whereof he triumphs with the greatest confidence of success, is that of Ezek. xviii. 24, 25; unto which words he subjoins a triumphant, exulting exclamation:—

"What more," saith he, "can the understanding, judgment, soul, and conscience of a man reasonably desire, for the establishment in any truth whatsoever, than is delivered by God himself in this passage, to evince the possibility of a righteous man's declining from his righteousness, and that unto death?"

The counsel given of old to the king may not be unseasonable to Mr Goodwin, in that dominion which he exerciseth in his own thoughts in this work of his, "Let not him that putteth on his armour boast like him that putteth it off." You have but newly entered the lists, and that with all *pressed soldiers*, unwilling so much as once to appear in that service they are forced to. If you will but suspend your triumph until we have made a little trial of your forces, and your skill in managing of them to the battle, perhaps you may be a little taken off from this confidence of success. Notwithstanding the forcing of this scripture upon the truth, being

cut off and taken away from that coherence, and connection, and station, wherein it is placed of God (which is not in the least inquired into), it will be found in the issue to bear it no ill-will at all, as will also be manifested by the light of the ensuing considerations:—

1. The matter under inquiry, and into a disquisition of whose state we have hitherto been engaged, is the condition of the saints of God, and his dealing with them in and under the covenant of grace in general. For our guidance and direction herein, a text of Scripture, evincing the righteousness of God's dealings with a number of persons, in a peculiar case which was under debate, is produced; and by the tenor of this, and according to the tenor of the reasonings therein, must all the promises of God in the covenant of grace, made and ratified by the blood of Christ, be regulated and interpreted! We have been told, by as learned a man as Mr Goodwin, "That promises made to the people of the Jews peculiarly, and suited to the peculiar state and condition wherein they were, do not concern the people of God in general;" and why may not the same be the condition of threatenings given out upon a parallel account? "Compedes quas fecit ipse ut ferat æquum est."

2. That it is the determination and stating of a particular controversy between God and the people of the Jews, suited to a peculiar dispensation of his providence towards them, which is here proposed, is evident from the occasion of the words, laid down verses 2, 3, "What mean ye, that ye use this proverb concerning the land of Israel, saying, The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge? As I live, saith the Lord GOD," etc. It is the use of a proverb concerning the land of Israel that God is decrying, and disproving the truth of the proverb itself under consideration; and that this should be the standard and rule of God's proceeding with his people in the covenant of mercy, no man that seems to have either understanding, judgment, or conscience, can reasonably imagine.

3. That it is not the nature and tenor of the covenant of grace, and God's dealing with his chosen secret ones, his saints, true believers, as to their eternal condition, which in these words is intended, but the manifestation of the righteousness of God in dealing with that people of the Jews, in a peculiar dispensation of his providence towards the body of the people and the nation in general, appears farther from the occasion of the words and the provocation given the Lord to make use of those expressions unto them. The proverb that God cuts out of their lips and mouths by the sword of his righteousness in those words was "concerning the land of Israel;" used perhaps mostly by them in captivity. But it was concerning the land of Israel, not concerning the eternal state and condition of the saints of God, but concerning the land of Israel, verse 2. God had of old given that land to that people by promise, and continued them in it

for many generations, until at length, for their wickedness, idolatry, abomination, and obstinacy in their evil ways, he caused them to be carried captive unto Babylon. In that captivity the Lord revenged upon them not only the sins of the present generation, but, as he told them, also those of their forefathers; especially the abomination, cruelty, idolatry, exercised in the days of Manasseh, taking this season for his work of vengeance on the generations following, who also so far walked in the steps of their forefathers as to justify all God's proceedings against them. Being wasted and removed from their own land by the righteous judgment of God, they considered the land of Israel, that was promised to them (though upon their good behaviour therein), and how, instead of a plentiful enjoyment of all things in peace and quietness therein, there were now a small remnant in captivity, the rest, the far greatest part, being destroyed by the sword and famine in that land. In this state and condition, being, as all others of their frame and principle, prone to justify themselves, they had hatched a proverb among themselves concerning the land of Israel promised to them, exceedingly opprobrious and reproachful to the justice of God in his dealings with them. The sum of the intendment of this saying that was grown rife amongst them was, that for the sins of their forefathers, many, yea, the greatest part of them, were slain in the land of Israel, and the rest carried from it into bondage and captivity. To vindicate the righteousness and equity of his ways, the impartiality of his judgments, the Lord recounts to them by his prophet many of their sins, whereof themselves with their fathers were guilty, in the land of their nativity, and for which he had brought all that calamity and desolation upon them whereof they did complain; affirming, under many supposals of rising and falling, that principle of rising and falling, that principle he laid down in the entrance of his dealings with them,—that every one of them suffered for his own iniquity, whatever they suffered, whether death or other punishment, and not for the sins of their forefathers, whatever influence they might have upon the procuring of the general vengeance that overtook the whole nation in the midst of their iniquity. This being the aim, scope, and tendency of the place, the import of the words and tenor of God's intendment in them, I cannot but wonder how any man of understanding and conscience can once imagine that God hath given any testimony to the possibility of falling out of covenant with him of those whom he hath taken nigh to himself through the blood of his Son in the everlasting bond thereof; as though it were any thing of his dealing with the saints in reference to their *spiritual* and *eternal* condition that the Lord here reveals his will about, being only the tenor of his dealings with the house of Israel in reference to the land of Canaan.

4. This is farther manifest in that principle and rule of God's pro-

ceedings in the matter, laid down verse 4; which is not only alien from, but also directly opposite unto, that which is the principle in the covenant of grace, "The soul that sinneth, it shall die,"—that soul and person, and not another,—when in that covenant of grace he "setteth forth his Son to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, giving him up to death for all, causing the just to die for the unjust," the soul that never sinned for the souls that had sinned, that they might go free. And I would fain know on what solid grounds an answer may be given to the Socinians' triumphing in the 4th verse against the satisfaction of Christ, no less than Mr Goodwin in the 24th and 25th, against the perseverance of the saints, if you do not manifest the whole tendency of this place to be accommodated to God's providential dispensation of temporal judgments and mercies in respect of that people and the covenant whereby they held the land of Canaan, and not at all to respect the general dispensation of his righteousness and grace in the blood of Christ. So that,—

5. The whole purport and intendment of the scripture under consideration is only to manifest the tenor of God's righteous proceeding with the people of Israel, in respect of his dispensation towards them in reference to the land of Canaan. Convincing them of their own abominations, confuting the profane proverb invented and reared up in the reproach of his righteousness, beating them from the vain pretence of being punished for their fathers' sins, and from the conceit of their own righteousness, which that people was perpetually puffed up withal, he lets them know that his dealing with them and his ways towards them were equal and righteous, in that there was none of them but was punished for his own sin; and though some of them might have made some profession and done some good, yet upon the whole matter, first or last, they had all declined, and therefore ought to own the punishment of their sins, God dealing severely, and unto death and destruction, with none but those who either wholly or upon the sum of the matter turned away from his judgments and statutes. So that,—

6. This being the tenor and importance of the words insisted on, this their tendency, aim, and accommodation to the objection levied against the righteousness of God in dealing with that people, this their rise and end, their spring and fall, it is evident beyond all contradiction, from any thing but prejudice itself, that all the inquiries and disputes about them,—as, whether the declaration of the mind of God in them be *hypothetical* or *absolute*, what is meant by the righteous person, what by his turning away, and what by the death threatened (all which expressions of the text are in themselves ambiguous, and must be limited from the circumstances of the place),—are altogether useless and needless, the words utterly refusing any accommodation to the business of our present debate. So that,—

7. This dependence of the words, scope of the context, design of the place, and intendment of God in it, [and] the accommodation of the whole discourse to the removal of the objection and disproving of the proverbial self-justification of a sinful people,—the only directories in the investigation of the true, proper, native, genuine sense and meaning of them,—[having been neither] eyed, weighed, nor considered by Mr Goodwin, who knew how much it was to his advantage to rend away these two verses from the body of the prophet's discourse, I might well supersede any farther proceedings in the examination of what he has prepared for a reply to the answers commonly given to the argument taken from this place; yet, that all security imaginable may be given to the reader of the inoffensiveness of this place as to the truth we maintain, I shall briefly manifest that Mr Goodwin hath not indeed effectually taken up and off any one answer, or any one parcel of any such, that hath usually been given by our divines unto the objection against the doctrine of perseverance hence levied.

That which naturally first offers itself to our consideration is, the form and tenor of the expressions here used, which is not of an absolute nature, but hypothetical. The import of the words is, "If a righteous man turn from his righteousness, and continue [not] therein, he shall die." "True," say they who make use of this consideration, "God here proposes the desert of sin, and the connection that is, by his appointment, between apostasy and the punishment thereunto allotted; but this not at all infers that any one who is truly righteous shall or may everlastingly so apostatize. Such comminations as these God maketh use of to caution believers of the evil of apostasy, and thereby to preserve them from it; as their tendency to that end, by the appointment of God, and their efficacy thereunto, hath been declared. So that, because God says, 'If a righteous man turn from his righteousness, he shall die,' the whole emphasis lying in the connection that is between such turning away and dying, to conclude (considering what is the proper use and intendment of such threatenings) that a man truly righteous may so fall away, is to build up that which the text contributes not any thing to in the least."

Against this plea Mr Goodwin riseth up with much contempt and indignation, chap. xii. sect. 9, in these words:—

"But this sanctuary hath also been profaned by some of the chief guardians themselves of that cause for the protection and safety whereof it was built. There needs no more be done (though much more might be done, yea, and hath been done by others) than that learned doctor so lately named hath done himself for the demolishing of it. Having propounded the argument from the place in Ezekiel according to the import of the interpretation asserted by us,

'Some,' saith he, 'answer, that a condition proves nothing in being; which how true soever it may be in respect of such hypotheticals which are made use of only for the amplification of matters, and serve for the aggravating either of the difficulty or indignity of a thing (as, 'If I should climb up into heaven, thou art there,' Ps. cxxxix., it were ridiculous to infer, therefore a man may climb up into heaven), yet such conditional sayings upon which admonitions, promises, or threatenings are built, do at least suppose something in possibility, however, by virtue of their tenor and form, they suppose nothing in being: for no man seriously intending to encourage a student in his way would speak thus to him, 'If thou wilt get all the books in the university library by heart, thou shalt be doctor this commencement.' Besides, in the case in hand, he that had a mind to deride the prophet might readily come upon him thus: 'But a righteous man, according to the judgment of those that are orthodox, cannot turn away from his righteousness; therefore your threatening is in vain.' Thus we see to how little purpose it is to seek for starting poles in such logic quirks as these.' Thus far the great assertor of the synod of Dort and the cause which they maintained, to show the vanity of such a sense or construction put upon the words now in debate which shall render them merely conditional, and will not allow them to import so much as a possibility of any thing contained or expressed in them."

Ans. 1. Doctor Prideaux's choosing not to lay the weight of this answer to the argument of the Arminians from this place on the hypothetical manner of the expression used therein, is called a "defiling the sanctuary by the guardians of the cause whose protection it undertakes."

> "Crimina rasis
> Librat in antithetis; doctas posuisse figuras
> Laudatur?" Pers., Sat. i. 85–87.

What are my thoughts of it I need not express, being unconcerned in the business, as knowing it not at all needful to be insisted on for the purpose for which it is produced, the text looking not at all towards the doctrines under consideration; yet I must needs say, I am not satisfied with the doctor's attempt for the removal of it, nor with what is farther added by the Remonstrants in the place which we are sent unto by Mr Goodwin's marginal directions. Though it should be granted that such conditional expressions do suppose, or may (for that they always do is not affirmed, and in some cases it is evident they do not), that there is something in *posse*, as the doctor speaks, whereunto they do relate, yet they do not infer that the possibility may by no means be hindered from ever being reduced into act. We grant a possibility of desertion in believers, in respect of their own principles of operation,—which is ground sufficient for to

give occasion to such hypothetical expressions as contain comminations and threatenings in them,—but yet, notwithstanding that possibility on that account supposed, [on the point whether] the bringing forth of that possibility into an actual accomplishment may not be effectually prevented by the Spirit and grace of God, the doctor says nothing. This, I say, is ground sufficient for such hypothetical comminations, that in respect of them to whom they are made, it is possible to incur the thing threatened by the means therein mentioned, which yet upon other accounts is not possible; that God who says, "If the righteous man turn from his righteousness, he shall die," and says so on purpose to preserve righteous men from so doing, knowing full well that the thing, in respect of themselves of whom and to whom he speaks, is sufficiently possible to give a clear foundation to that expression. So that if Mr Goodwin hath not something of his own to add, he will find little relief from the conceptions of that learned doctor; wherein yet I should not have translated some phrases and expressions, as Mr Goodwin hath made bold to do.

He adds, therefore, p. 276, "To say that God putteth a case in such solemnity and emphaticalness of words and phrase as are remarkable all along in the carriage of the place in hand, of which there is no possibility that it should ever happen or be exemplified in reality of event, and this in vindication of himself and the equity of his dealings and proceedings with men, is to bring a scandal and reproach of weakness upon that infinite wisdom of his which magnifies itself in all his works; which also is so much the more unworthy and unpardonable when there is a sense commodious, every way worthy as well the infinite wisdom as the goodness of God, pertinent and proper to the occasion he hath in hand, which offers itself plainly and clearly." So far he.

And this is all, it seems, which Mr Goodwin hath to add. And, indeed, this all is nothing at all, but only the repetition of what was urged before by the doctor, in more swelling and less significant terms. What possibility there is in the thing hath been before manifested. That this possibility should necessarily be exemplified in reality of event, to give significancy to this expression, I suppose is not Mr Goodwin's own intendment. True believers, according to the doctrine he asserts (as he pretends), are only in such a remote possibility of apostasy as that it can scarce be called *danger*. Now, doubtless, it is possible that such a *remote possibility* may never be reduced into act. But now if Mr Goodwin will not be contented with such a possibility as *may*, but also will have that [which] *must* be exemplified in reality of event, he has advanced from a *possibility* in all to a *necessity* in some to apostatize.

2. Had Mr Goodwin a little more attended to what here drops

from him,—namely, "That the words are used for the vindication of the justice of the proceedings of God," namely, in the particular case formerly opened and cleared,—perhaps he would himself have judged the edge of this weapon to be so far blunted as to render it wholly useless to him in the combat wherein he is engaged. I hope, at least, that by the light of this spark he may apprehend the emphaticalness of all the expressions used in this place to be pointed towards the particular case under consideration, and not in the least to be expressive of the possibility he contends for. God knows what beseems his own infinite wisdom, and hath given us rules to judge thereof, as far as we are called thereto, in his word; and from thence, whether Mr Goodwin will pardon us or no in our so doing, we doubt not to evince that it exceedingly becomes the infinitely wise God emphatically to express that connection that is between one thing and another (sin and punishment, believing and salvation), by his appointment, though some never believe unto salvation, nor some sin to the actual inflicting of punishment on them. And as for Mr Goodwin's "commodious sense" of this place, we see not any advantage in it for any but those who are engaged into an opposition to the covenant of the grace of God and his faithfulness therein. So that once more, upon the whole matter, this text is discharged from farther attendance in the trial of the truth in hand.

The severals of the text come nextly under consideration, and amongst them, first, the subject spoken of (that we may take the words in some order, Mr Goodwin having roved up and down, backwards and forwards, from one end of the text to the other, without any at all), and this is, "A righteous man;" that is, such an one as is described, verses 5–9, "But if a man," etc.; that is, such an one as walks up to the judgments, and statutes, and ordinances of God, so far as they were of him required in the covenant of the land of Canaan, and according to the tenor of it, whereby they held their possession therein, and whereby heavenly things were also shadowed out. That this is the person intended, this his righteousness, and this the matter upon which he is here tried, is clear in the contexts beyond all possible contradiction; so that all farther inquiries into what righteousness is intended is altogether needless. What with any colour of probability can be pretended from hence as to the matter in hand arises from the analogy of God's dealings with men in the tenor of the covenant of grace and the covenant of the land of Israel; which yet are eminently distinguished in the very foundation of them, the one being built upon this bottom, "The soul that sinneth, it shall die," the other upon a dispensation of another import, as has been declared. We do, then, plainly supererogate as to the cause in hand, by the confutation of the answers which Mr Goodwin farther attempts to remove, and his endeavour therein; which yet shall not be declined.

Sect. 8. One exposition, by some insisted on, of this term "A righteous man," is thus proposed by Mr Goodwin: "Notwithstanding, some formerly, it seems, in favour of the doctrine, attempted an escape from that sword of Ezekiel lately drawn against it, by pretending that by the 'righteous man' mentioned in the passage in hand is not meant a person truly and really righteous, but a kind of formal hypocrite, or outside professor of righteousness."

Those who insist on this interpretation of the place tell you that in the commands of God there is the mere end of them considerable, and not the manner of their performance, which is as the life and power of the obedience of them, which is acceptable to God; farther, that many persons, wrought upon by the power of conviction from the law of God, and enabled in some measure with common gifts and graces, do go forth in such a way to the performance of the commands of God, as to the substance and matter of them (wherein also they are not hypocritical, in the strict sense of the word, but sincere), and so are called and counted righteous, comparatively so, in respect of those who live in open rebellion against the Lord and his ways. And such as these, they say, as they are oftentimes useful in their generations, and bring glory to God by their profession, so (especially under the old legal dispensation of the covenant) they are rewarded in a plentiful manner of God in this life, in the enjoyment of the abundance of all things in peace and quietness. Of this sort of men, —that is, men upright and righteous in their dealings with men and in the world, conscientious in their trust, yielding professed subjection to the judgments and institutions of God, performing outwardly all known duties of religious men,—they say, that after they have made a profession of some good continuance, having never attained union with God in Christ, nor being built on the rock, many do fall into all manner of spiritual and sensual abominations, exposing themselves to all the judgments and vengeance of God in this life, which also under the old testament generally overtook them, God being (as here he pleads) righteous herein. In this description of the righteous person here intended, there is no occasion in the least administered to Mr Goodwin to relieve himself against it by that which, in the close of this section, he borrows from Dr Prideaux,—namely, "That if the righteous man should turn himself away from his counterfeit and hypocritical righteousness, he should rather live than die;" for they say not that this righteousness is hypocritical or counterfeit, but true and sincere in its kind, only the person himself is supposed not to be partaker of the righteousness of God in Christ and of a principle of life from him, which should alter his obedience, and render it spiritual and acceptable to God in the Son of his love.

What more says Mr Goodwin unto this exposition of the words? With many scornful expressions cast both upon it (as by himself

stated and laid down) and the synod of Dort, he tells you it was rejected by the synod. That some in the synod, looking on it perhaps under such a sense and apprehension as Mr Goodwin proposeth it in, did not see cause to close with it, may be true; yet that it was rejected by the synod Mr Goodwin can by no means prove, whatever he is pleased to say, and to insult thereon upon the judgments of very learned men, whom he hath no reason upon any account in the world to despise, the labours of very many of them praising them in the gates of Zion, exceedingly above the cry and clamour of all reproaches whatever mustered to their dishonour. But to let pass those poor, contemptible wretches, let us see how this master in our Israel in his indignation deals with this silly shift, whereby poor men strive to avoid his fury. Says he, then,—

"And indeed the whole series and carriage of the context, from verse 20 to the end of the chapter, demonstratively evinceth that by the 'righteous man' all along is meant such a man as was or is truly righteous, and who, had he persevered in that way of righteousness wherein he some time walked, should have worn the crown of righteousness, and received the reward of a righteous man; as by the 'wicked man,' all along opposed to him, is meant not a person seemingly wicked, but truly and really so, as is acknowledged on all hands. So that the antithesis or opposition between the righteous and the wicked, running so visibly quite through the body of the discourse, must needs be dissolved, if by the 'righteous man' should be meant a person seemingly righteous only, he that is righteous in this sense being truly and really wicked."

Ans. The main series and context of the chapter, without the least endeavour to give any light or illustration thereunto by the scope, occasion, or dependence of the parts of it one upon another, does more than once stand Mr Goodwin in stead, when nothing else presents itself to his relief. It is true, the whole context of the chapter grants the person spoken of to be righteous in the performance of the duties mentioned in the chapter, in opposition to the wicked man and his intentions and ways described therein, in proportion to the dispensation of the covenant, whose rule and principle is placed in the head of verse 20, which Mr Goodwin directs us unto, namely, "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." And as there is nothing in all this contrary to any thing in this exposition by Mr Goodwin opposed, so there is not any thing more proved, nor once attempted to be, here by Mr Goodwin himself, than what is confessed therein.

It is acknowledged that the person spoken of is truly and really righteous, with that kind of righteousness which is intended, and wherein if he continued he was to receive the reward of righteousness then under consideration; and yet though such an one might be truly and really united unto Christ, there is nothing in the text

or context enforcing that such an one and none else is intended here. And more in this case Mr Goodwin hath not to add; nor doth he threaten us with any more than he hath delivered, as he did upon the consideration of the tenor of the words, and our inquiry whether they are of an hypothetical or absolute nature and importance.

It is true, he adds that "Calvin, in his exposition on the place, notwithstanding his wariness to manage it so as that the doctrine of perseverance, which he maintained, might suffer no damage" (which perhaps Mr Goodwin was not so wary in expressing, contending so much as he does to manifest that he had thoughts lying another way), "and therefore asserting the person here spoken of to be a person seemingly righteous only, yet lets fall such things as declare nothing to be wanting in this righteous person but perseverance." But that Calvin grants, in any expression of his, this person, or him concerned herein, to be in such an estate as to want nothing but perseverance to render him everlastingly blessed, is notoriously false; neither does any thing in the expressions cited by Mr Goodwin come from the body of his discourse, [or] in the least look that way, as might easily be manifested, did I judge it meet, in a contest of this nature, to trade in the authorities of men: so that I cannot but wonder with what confidence he is pleased to impose such a sense upon his words. All this while, then, notwithstanding any thing our author hath to say to the contrary, the righteous person here intended may be only such an one as was described in the entrance of this consideration of his; and that it is not requisite, from the text or context, that he should be any other is more evident than that it is to be contended against.

Sect. 7, he deals with another exposition of the words, which hath no small countenance given unto it from the Scriptures; which, for to prevail himself upon an expression or two by-the-by, he sets down in the words of Dr Prideaux, Lect. vi.; and they are these: "There is," saith he, "a double righteousness;—one inherent, or of works, by which we are sanctified; another imputed, or of faith, whereby we are justified. A righteous man may turn aside from his own righteousness, namely, from his holiness, and fall into very heinous sins; but it doth not follow from hence that therefore he hath wholly shaken off from him (or out of him) the righteousness of Christ." To this he advances a threefold reply:—

1. "The doctor here presents us with a piece of new divinity, in making sanctification and justification no more intimate friends than that one can live without the company and presence of the other. Doubtless, if a man's justification may stay behind when his holiness is departed, that assertion of the apostle will hardly stand, 'Without holiness no man shall see the Lord,' Heb. xii. 14; and if 'They that are Christ's' (that is, who believe in Christ, and thereby are justified)

'have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts' (another assertion of the same apostle), how their relation unto Christ should stand, and yet their holiness sink and fall, I understand not. But I leave his friends to be his enemies in this."

Ans. How little advantage Mr Goodwin hath obtained by attempting a diversion from the consideration of the matter insisted on (which is all he doth in this paragraph) will quickly appear. From the righteousness of sanctification there is, or may be supposed, a twofold fall;—first, From the *exercises of it*, in all or any of the fruits thereof, according to the will of God; secondly, From the *habit and principle* of it, in respect of its root and ground-work in the soul. It is the former that the doctor asserts. "A man," saith he, "may fall away from the zealous practice of the duties of holiness, and, with or under violence of temptation, as to fruit-bearing, decay in close walking, until the whole seem ready to die, so as, through the righteous judgment of God, to be exposed to calamities, corrections, and punishments in this life, yea, the great death itself, as it fell out in the case of Josiah, who fell by the sword in undertaking against the mind and will of God." But now for the work and principles of holiness, none who have once received it can ever cast it up and become wholly without it; and between this and the righteousness of justification, there is that strict connection that the one cannot, doth not, consist without the other. If now Mr Goodwin understands not how a justified, sanctified person, may decline from the ways and practice of holiness for a season, so as to provoke the Lord to deal sharply, yea, and sometimes terribly with him, to take vengeance on his inventions, and yet that person not lose his relation to Christ nor his interest in the love and favour of God, I shall not presume to instruct him in the knowledge thereof, but refer him to them who are better able so to do; wherein, upon the account of his aptness to hear as well as teach, I presume their undertaking will not be difficult. He adds,—

2. "He seems, by his word *penitus*, wholly, throughly, or altogether, to be singular also in another strain of divinity, and to teach *magis* and *minus* in justification: for in saying that from a man's apostatizing from his own righteousness, 'it doth not follow that therefore he hath wholly or altogether shaken off the imputed righteousness of Christ,' doth he not imply that a man may shake off some part of the righteousness of Christ from him, and yet keep another part of it upon him? or else, that by sinning he may come to wear the entire garment or clothing of it so loosely that it will be ready to drop or fall off from him every hour? and, consequently, that the righteousness of Christ sits faster and closer upon some than upon others, yea, upon the same person at one time than another."

Ans. That this is a second attempt for to lead the reader off from

the consideration of the business in hand, and to prepare him by a diversion to an acceptation of what he afterward tenders in way of reply, that he may not perceive how insufficient it is for the purpose by an immediate comparing of it with the answer itself, is evident. Truly, when, in my younger days, I was wont to hear that doctor in his lectures and other exercises, I did not think then I should have afterward found him called in question for want of skill to express himself and the sense of his mind in Latin, he having a readiness and dexterity in that language equal to any that ever I knew; neither yet am I convinced that his word *penitus*, upon which Mr Goodwin criticiseth (being commonly, as might by innumerable instances be made good, used to increase and make emphatical the import of the word wherewith it is associated), will evince any such meaning in his expression as is there intended by Mr Goodwin. Justification is, and it was so taught by the doctor to be (Lect. de Just.), in respect of all persons that are partakers of it, equal, and equal to every person so partaking of it at all times, though in regard of sense and *perception*, and the peace and comfort wherewith (when perceived and felt) it is attended, it is no less subject to increases and wanings than sanctification itself. So that this also might be intended by the doctor, without the least "strain of new divinity," that justified and sanctified persons, though they might so decline from the course of close walking with God as for a season to be like a tree in winter, whose substance is in his roots, his leaves and fruit falling off, ceasing to bring forth the fruits of holiness in such degrees as formerly, and so lose their sense of acceptation with God through Christ, and the peace, with consolation and joy, wherewith it is attended, yet they could not, nor should, wholly be cast out of the favour of God, the nature and essence of their justification being abiding; and what singular strain of divinity there is in the tendency of such a discourse I know not. Besides, that teaching of *magis* and *minus* in justification should be any singular thing in Mr Goodwin I do not well understand; for if the matter of our righteousness, or that upon the imputation whereof unto us we are justified, may have its degrees, and receive *magis* and *minus*, as certainly our faith may and doth, why our justification may not do so too I see no reason. But he comes at length to the matter, and addeth,—

3. "Lastly; were it granted unto the doctor that from a man's turning aside from his own holiness, it doth not follow that therefore he hath wholly divested himself of the righteousness of Christ imputed, yet from God's determination or pronouncing a man to be in an estate of condemnation and of death it follows roundly, that therefore he is divested of the righteousness of Christ imputed (if ever he were invested with it before); because no man with that righteousness upon him can be in such an estate. Now we have, upon several

grounds, proved that the 'righteous man,' under that apostasy wherein Ezekiel describes and presents him, is pronounced by God a child not of a temporal but eternal death and condemnation. This, indeed, the doctor denies, but gives no reason of his denial, for which I blame him not; only, I must crave leave to say, that the chair[1] weigheth not so much as one good argument with me, much less as many. So that, all this while, He that spake and still speaks unto the world by Ezekiel is no friend to that doctrine which denieth a possibility of a righteous man's declining even unto death."

Ans. If this be all that Mr Goodwin hath to say for the removal of this answer, that cuts the throat of his argument if it be not removed, he hath little reason for the confidence wherewith he closeth it, concerning God's speaking in this place of Ezekiel against that doctrine which, in innumerable places of his word, he hath taught us is a doctrine inwrapping no small portion of that grace which, in a covenant of mercy, he dispenseth to his chosen, redeemed, justified, sanctified ones; neither is there any need to add the weight of the chair (wherein yet that person spoken of behaved himself worthily in his generation, and was in his exercises therein by no means by Mr Goodwin to be despised) [to] be laid upon the reasonings of the doctor in this case, they proving singly of themselves too heavy for Mr Goodwin to bear. In brief, that the substance of the reply in hand is merely a begging of the thing in question, any one that hath but half an eye in a business of this nature may easily discern. That it is supposed that a man truly righteous and justified in the blood of Christ may so fall away as to be pronounced of God to be in a state of damnation, and so fallen really from his former condition (Rom. viii. 1), is the thing that Mr Goodwin hath to prove. "Now," saith he, "this must needs be so, because God here, upon such a supposal, pronounceth such a man to be in the estate of condemnation." What this is with other men I know not, but to me it is no proof at all, nor should I believe that to be the sense of the place, though, in variety of expressions, he should significantly affirm it a thousand times. The reader also is misinformed that the doctor attempts not any proof that by death, eternal death is not in this place intended; he that shall consult the place will find himself abused. But we must speak more of this anon.

And this is all our author offers as to the person spoken of in the place of Scripture under consideration; wherein, though he hath taken some pains, to little or no purpose, to take off the exposition of the words and the description of the person given by others, yet he hath not attempted to give so much as one argument to confirm the sense he would impose on us concerning the condition of the person spoken of; and I must crave leave to say, that naked assertions, be

[1] Dr Prideaux was regius professor of divinity at Oxford in 1615.—Ed.

they never so many, in the chair or out, weigh not so much with me as one good argument, much less as many.

There is nothing remains for consideration but only the comminatory part of the words, or the expression of the punishment allotted of God to such as walk in the ways of apostasy here expressed, "In his trespass that he hath trespassed, and in his sin that he hath sinned, in them shall he die;" that is, "He shall be dealt withal as many of his nation were in the land of Israel. My judgments shall overtake him. It shall not advantage him that either he had godly parents that have walked with me, or that he himself had so behaved himself in a way of righteousness, as before described. If he turn to the profaneness and abominations which are laid down as the ways of wicked men, or into any paths like them, he shall even die, or be punished for his sins;" according to the tenor of the truth laid down in the entrance of the chapter, and repeated again verse 20, "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." But now, whereas it might be replied, "Such an one, notwithstanding his degeneracy, might yet perhaps recover himself to his former way of walking, obedience, and righteousness in conversation, and is there then no hope nor help for him, but having once so apostatized he must suffer for it?" to prevent any such misprision of the mind of God, there is added the term of his duration in that state of apostasy; that is, even unto death: "If he committeth iniquity, and dieth in it," that is, repents not of it before his death, "the judgments of God shall find him out," as was before expressed; "If by his repentance he prevent not his calamities, he shall end his sinning in destruction;"—in which expressions of the person's continuance in his apostatized condition, and of the judgments of God falling on him on that account, there is not the least appearance of any tautology or incongruity in the sense. The same word is used to express diverse concernments of it, which is no tautology. Though the same word be used, yet the same thing is not intended. Tautology reflects on things, not words; otherwise there must be a tautology wherever there is an ἀνταπάκλασις, as John i. 3. "To commit iniquity, and to die therein," is no more but to continue in his iniquity impenitently until death. Now, to say that [this], "A man was put to death for his fault, because he committed it, and continued impenitent in it, even unto the death which he was adjudged to, and which was inflicted on him for his fault," is an incoherent expression, it seems will puzzle as great a master of language as Mr Goodwin to make good.

Mr Goodwin endeavours to make the punishment threatened in the words, "He shall die for his iniquity," *precisely* and *exclusively* to signify eternal death (which the former interpretation doth not exclude); which he is no way able to make good. What he offers, sect. 3, concerning the incongruity of the sense, and tautology of the ex-

pression of it, [if it] be not so understood, hath been already removed. The comparison ensuing, instituted between these words and those of 1 Cor. vi. 10, should have been enforced with some consideration of the coincidence of the scope of either place, with the expressions used in them. And though repentance (which is also added) will not deliver them from temporal or natural death, yet it may and will, as [it] did Ahab in part, from having that death inflicted in the way of an extraordinary judgment.

Sect. 4. Mr Goodwin offers sundry things, all of the same importance and tendency, all animated by the same fallacies or mistakes, to make good the sense he insists on, exclusively to all others, of these words, "He shall die;" and he tells you that "if the righteousness such a man hath done shall come into no account, if it shall not profit him as to his temporal deliverance, then it is impossible it should profit him as to his eternal salvation." But, first, according to our interpretation of the words, there is no necessity incumbent on us to affirm that the person mentioned shall obtain salvation, though we say that eternal death is not precisely threatened in the words. But yet, that a man may not by the just hand of God, be punished with temporal death for his faults and iniquities (as Josiah fell by the sword), and yet have his righteousness reckoned to him as to his great recompense of reward, is a strain of doctrine that Mr Goodwin will scarce abide by. I dare not say that all who died in the wilderness of the children of Israel went to hell and came short of eternal life, and yet they all fell there because of their iniquities. But he adds,—

Sect. 4. "Again; that which God here threateneth against that double or twofold iniquity of backsliding is opposed to that life which is promised to repentance and perseverance in well-doing; but this life is confessed by all to be eternal life: therefore the death opposed to it must needs be eternal, or the second death. When the apostle saith, 'The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord," Rom. vi. 23, is it not evident from the antithesis, or opposition in the sentence between the death and life mentioned in it, that by that death which he affirms to be the wages of sin is meant eternal death? how else will the opposition stand?"

Ans. It is true, the life and death here mentioned, the one promised, verse 9, the other threatened in those insisted on, are opposed, and of what nature and kind the one is, of the same is the other to be esteemed. It is also confessed that the life promised in the covenant of mercy to repentance is eternal life, and the wages of sin mentioned in the law is eternal death; but that therefore that must be the sense of the words when they are made use of in answer to an objection expressed in a proverb concerning the land of Israel, and when it was temporal death that was complained of before in

the proverb, "The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge" (they did not complain that they were damned for their fathers' sins), that Mr Goodwin doth not attempt to prove; and I do not blame him for his silence therein. He says yet again,—

"When God in the Scriptures threatens impenitent persons with death for their sins, doubtless he intends and means eternal death, or that death which is the wages of sin; otherwise we have no sufficient ground to believe or think that men dying in their sins without repentance shall 'suffer the vengeance of eternal fire,' but only a temporal or natural death, which those who are righteous and truly eminent themselves suffer as well as they. Therefore, to say that God threatens impenitent apostates (in the place in hand) with a temporal death only, when, as elsewhere, he threatens impenitency under the lightest guilt of all with eternal death, is in effect to represent him as vehement and sore in his dissuasives from ordinary and lesser sins, and as indifferent and remiss in dissuading from sins of the greatest provocation."

Ans. The sum of this reason is, "If the death there threatened to those men of our present contest be not death eternal, we have no sufficient ground to believe that God will inflict any death on impenitent apostates but only that which is temporal or natural, which others die as well as they." And why so, I beseech you? Is there no other place of Scripture whence it may be evinced that eternal death is the wages of sin? or is every place thereof where death is threatened to sin so circumstantiated as this place is? is the threatening everywhere given out upon the like occasion, and to be accommodated to the like state of things? These discourses are exceedingly loose, sophistical, and inconclusive. Neither is a violent death counted natural, though it be the dissolution of nature.

Neither is there any thing more added by Mr Goodwin, in all his considerations of the words of this passage of the Scriptures, than what we have insisted on. That [argument] he nextly mentioneth, "That if God here threateneth impenitent sinners only with temporal death, then why should the most profligate sinners fear any other punishment?" is of [no?] more energy for the confirmation and building up of the sense which he imposeth on the words than that which went before. They with whom he hath to do will tell him that he doth all along most vainly assume and beg the thing in question, namely, that the persons intimated are absolutely impenitent sinners, and not so under some considerations only,—that is, that do never recover themselves from their degeneracy from close walking with God,—nor do the words indeed necessarily import any thing else. And for impenitent sinners in general (not those who are only so termed), there are testimonies sufficient in the Scriptures concerning God's righteous judgment in their eternal condemnation.

And this is the first testimony produced by Mr Goodwin for the proof of the saints' apostasy,—a witness which of all others he doth most rely upon, and which he bringeth in with the greatest acclamation of success (before the trial) imaginable. But when he hath brought him forth, he gives us no account in the least whence he comes, what is his business, or what he aims to confirm, nor can make good his speaking one word on his behalf! Indeed, as the matter is handled, I something question whether lightly a weaker argument hath been leaned on, in a case of so great importance, than that which from these words is drawn for the apostasy of the saints; for as we have not the least attempt made to give us an account of the context, scope, and intendment of the place (by which yet the expressions in the verses insisted on must be regulated), so no more can any one expression in it be made good to be of that sense and signification which yet alone will or can yield the least advantage to the cause for whose protection it is so earnestly called upon. Now, the leaders and captains of the forces Mr Goodwin hath mustered in this 12th chapter being thus discharged, the residue, or the followers thereof, will easily be prevailed with to return every one to his own place in peace.

The next place of Scripture produced to consideration, Mr Goodwin ushers in (sect. 11) with a description of the adversaries with whom in this contest he hath to do; and sets them off to public view with the desirable qualifications of "ignorance," "prejudice," and "partiality," having, it seems, neither ingenuity enough candidly and fairly themselves to search into and to weigh the scriptures wherein the case in question is clearly determined, nor skill enough to understand and receive them when so dexterously opened to their hand by Mr Goodwin. What they are the Lord knoweth, will judge, determine, and in the appointed time declare; and it may be the day that shall manifest all things will vindicate them from these reproaches. In the meantime, such expressions as these lie in the middle between all parties at variance, exposed to the use of any one that is pleased to take them up. The place insisted on in the sequel of this preface is the parable of our Saviour, Matt. xviii. 32–35; the whole extent of the parable is from verse 21 to the end of the chapter. Hence Mr Goodwin thus inferreth, sect. 11:—

"Evident it is, from our Saviour's reddition or application of the parable, 'So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if,' etc., speaking unto his disciples, verse 1, and to Peter more particularly, verse 21, that persons truly regenerate and justified before God (for such were they to whom in special manner he addressed the parable and the application of it, and indeed the whole carriage of the parable showeth that it was calculated and formed only for such) may, through high misdemeanours in sinning (as, for example,

by unmercifulness, cruelty, oppression, etc.), turn themselves out of the justifying grace and favour of God, quench the Spirit of regeneration, and come to have their portion with hypocrites and unbelievers."

Ans. 1. This is not the only occasion whereupon we have to deal with this parable. The Socinians wrest it also with violence to disprove the satisfaction of Christ, from the mention that is made in it of the free forgiveness of sins, and the Lord's enjoining others to do what he did;—they, doubtless, being [ready] to forgive without satisfaction given or made as to any crimes committed against them! Mr Goodwin, with much less probability of drawing nigh to the intendment of our Saviour in this place, makes use of it, or rather abuses it, to countenance his doctrine of the apostasy of the saints. To both I say, parables have their bounds and limits, their lines and proportions, scope and peculiar intendment, beyond which they prove nothing at all. To wring the nose of a parable or similitude, to force it to an universal compliance, will bring forth blood. There is nothing so sottish, or foolish, or contradictious in and to itself, as may not be countenanced from teaching parables to be instructive and proving in every parcel or expression that attends them. The intendment of the parable here used, that whereas, from the proportion and answerableness of the *comparates*, it argueth, is neither that God forgives without satisfaction to his justice, being the judge of all the world, nor that believers may fall away by sins of unmercifulness and oppression, and so perish everlastingly; but that men, upon the account of mercy and forgiveness received from God in Christ, ought to extend mercy and kindness to their brethren, God threatening and revenging unmercifulness and oppression in and on whomsoever it is found. Whether it be ignorance in us or what it be, the Lord knows and will judge; but we are not able to stretch the lines of this parable one step towards what Mr Goodwin would lengthen them unto. That no persons whatever must or ought to expect the grace and pardoning mercy of God to them, who have no bowels of compassion towards their brethren, is clearly taught. In making the rest of the circumstances of the parable argumentative, we cannot join with our adversary, he himself in his so doing working merely for his own ends.

2. Finding his exposition of this parable liable and obnoxious to an exception, in that it renders God changeable in his dealings with men, and a knot to be cast on his doctrine which he is not able to untie, he ventures boldly to cut it in pieces, by affirming "that indeed God loves no man at all with any love but the approbation of the qualifications that are in him, and that he cannot be said to change in reference to that which is not in him at all." This he sets out and illustrates variously with the dealings of men, and the laws that are made amongst them, rewarding what is good and

punishing what is evil, etc.,—words fully fitted, in his apprehension, to the clearing of God from any shadow of alteration in that course of proceeding which to him he ascribes,—and tells you, "The root of the mistake concerning the love of God" towards any man's person lies in that "capital error of personal election," or a purpose of God to give grace and glory to any one in Christ. Κακοῦ κόρακος κακίον ὠόν. That Mr Goodwin doth at all understand the love of God, if his apprehension of it be uniform to what he expresseth here in disputation, I must question. An eternal, unchangeable love of God to some in Christ is not now my task to demonstrate; it may, through the patience and goodness of God, find a place in my weak endeavours for the Lord ere long, when it will be a matter of delight to consider the scriptures and testimonies of antiquity that Mr Goodwin will produce for the eversion of such a personal election. For the present, I shall only take notice of the force of his judgment in the thing which, sect. 13, he here delivers: "All the love which God bears to men, or to any person of man, is either in respect of their nature and as they are men, in respect of which he bears a general or common love to them; or in respect of their qualifications as they are good men in one degree or other, in respect whereof he bears a more special love to them." What that "common love" is in Mr Goodwin's doctrine which God bears to "all men, as men," we know full well; he also himself is not unacquainted how often it hath been demonstrated to be a vain and foolish figment (in the sense by him and his associates obtruded on us), derogatory to all the glorious properties of the nature of God, and inconsistent with any thing that of himself he hath revealed; the demonstration and farther eviction whereof waits its season, which I hope draweth on. The "special love" which he bears persons "in respect of their qualifications" is only his *approbation of those qualifications*, wherever they are, and in whomsoever. That these qualifications are, faith, love, repentance, gospel obedience, etc., is not called into question. I would fain know of Mr Goodwin on what account and consideration some men, and not all, are translated from the condition of being objects of God's common love to become objects of his peculiar love, or from whence spring those qualifications which are the procurement of it, —whether they are from any love of God to them in whom they are. If not, on what account do men come to have faith, love, obedience, etc.? If they are from any love of God, whether it be from the common love of God to man, as men? and if so, why are not all men endowed with these qualifications? If from his peculiar love, how come they to be the effects and causes of the same thing? Or whether, indeed, this assertion be not destructive to the whole covenant of grace, and the effectual dispensations of it in the blood of Christ? And to his second testimony I shall add no more.

The third place insisted on is that of the apostle, 1 Cor. ix. 27. Hence he thus argueth:—

"If Paul, after his conversion unto Christ, was in a possibility of being or becoming a 'reprobate' or 'castaway,' then may true believers fall away both totally and finally (for finally ever includes totally); but the antecedent is true,—Paul after his conversion was in the possibility mentioned: *ergo*. The major proposition, I presume, will pass without control."

Ans. That Mr Goodwin is not able to make good either of the propositions in this syllogism will evidently appear in the conclusion of our examination of what he draws forth, new and old, to that purpose. Of the major he gives you only this account, "It will pass, I presume, without control." But by his favour, unless cleared from ambiguity of expressions and fallacy, it is not like to obtain so fair a passage as is presumed and fancied.

Though the term of "possibility" in the supposition, and "may" in the inference, seem to be equipollent, yet to render them of the same significancy as to the argument in hand, they must both be used in the same respect. But if a possibility of being a reprobate (that is, one rejected of God, by a metonymy of the effect) be ascribed to Paul in respect of himself and the infirmity of his own will as to abiding with God (in which case alone there is any appearance of truth in the assumption of this supposition), and the term of "may," in respect of believers falling totally and finally away, respects the event and purpose, decrees or promise of God concerning it (in which sense alone it is any step to the purpose in hand), I deny the inference, and thereby at the very entrance give check and control to Mr Goodwin's procedure. That which is possible to come to pass, that term "possible" affecting the end or coming to pass, must be every way and in all respects possible; this is the intendment of the inference. That which is possible in respect of some certain causes or principles (the terms of "possibility" affecting the thing itself whereof it is spoken in its next causes) may be impossible on another account; and in this sense only is there any colour of truth contained in the supposition. So that the major proposition of this syllogism is laid up and secured from doing any farther service in this case.

The minor is, "But Paul after his conversion was in a possibility of becoming a reprobate or castaway."

Ans. He was not in respect of the event, upon the account of the purpose and promises of God of him and to him, made in Christ, though any such possibility may be affirmed of him in respect of himself and his own will, not confirmed in grace unto an impossibility of swerving. Now, this proposition he thus farther attempts syllogistically to confirm:—

"That which Paul was very solicitous and industrious to prevent,

he was in a possibility of suffering or being made; but Paul was very solicitous and industrious to prevent his being made a castaway, as the scripture in hand plainly avoucheth,—he kept under his body and brought it into subjection, in order to prevent his becoming a castaway: *ergo*, he was in danger or possibility of being made a castaway.' The reason of the consequence in the major proposition is, because no man of understanding will be solicitous to prevent or hinder the coming to pass of such a thing, the coming to pass whereof he knows to be impossible."

Ans. Once more the major is questioned. Paul might and ought to labour, in the use of means, for the preventing of that which, in respect of himself, he might possibly run into, God having appointed those means to be used for the prevention of the end feared and avoided, although in respect of some other preventing cause it was impossible he should so do. He who complained that "in him, that is, in his flesh, dwelt no good," that "he had a law in his members leading him captive to the law of sin, and sin working in him all manner of concupiscence," for whose prevention from running out into a course of sinning God had appointed means to be used, might use those means for that end, notwithstanding that God had immutably purposed and faithfully promised that in the use of those means he should attain the end aimed at. And the reason Mr Goodwin gives for the confirmation of the consequence is no other but that which we have so often exploded,—namely, that a man need not, ought not to use means for attaining of any end, though appointed and instituted of God for that end and purpose, if so be the end for which they are ordained shall certainly and infallibly be compassed and accomplished by them. Our Saviour Christ thought meet to use the ordinary ways for the preservation of his life, notwithstanding the promise of keeping him by the angels; and Hezekiah neglected not the means of life, notwithstanding the infallible promise of living so long which he had received. Paul was careful, in the use of means, to prevent that which, in [respect of] himself, it was possible for him to run into, though he had, or might have had, assurance that, through the faithfulness and power of God, in the use of those means (as an antecedent of the consequent, though not the conditions of the event), he should be preserved certainly and infallibly from what he was in himself so apt unto. So that, whatever be the peculiar intendment of the apostle in this place, taking the term ἀδόκιμος in the largest sense possible, and in a significancy of the greatest compass, yet nothing will regularly be inferred thence to the least prejudice of the doctrine I have undertaken to maintain.

And this may suffice as to the utmost of what Mr Goodwin's argument from this place doth reach unto. There is another, and that a more proper sense of the place, and accommodated to the context

and scope of the apostle, wherewith the doctrine endeavoured to be confirmed from hence hath not the least pretence of communion; and this ariseth (as was before manifested) from the scope of the place, with the proper, native signification of the word ἀδόκιμος, here translated "a castaway."

The business that the apostle hath in hand, from verse 15 of the chapter, and which he presses to the end, is a relation of his own principles, ways, and deportment, in the great work of the preaching of the gospel to him committed. In the last words of the chapter he acquaints us with one especial aim he had in the carrying on of that work, through the whole course of his employment therein; and it is, such care and endeavour after *personal mortification*, holiness, and self-denial, that he might no way be lifted up nor entangled with the revelations made to him; therein providing, in the midst of the great certainty and assurance which he had, verse 26, that he might approve himself "a workman not needing to be ashamed," as not only preaching to others for their good, but himself also accepted of God in the discharge of that employment, as one that had dealt uprightly and faithfully therein. Verse 27, he acquaints us with what is the state and condition of them that preach the gospel: their work may go on, and yet themselves not be approved in the work. This he laboured to prevent, walking uprightly, faithfully, sincerely, zealously, humbly, in the discharge of his duty: Μήπως ἄλλοις κηρύξας, saith he, αὐτὸς ἀδόκιμος γένωμαι·—"Lest having preached to others, he should not himself be approved and accepted in that work," and so lose the reward mentioned, verse 17, peculiar to them who walk in the discharge of their duty with a right foot, according to the mind of God. The whole context, design, and scope of the apostle, with the native signification of the word ἀδόκιμος, leading us evidently and directly to this interpretation, it is sufficiently clear that Mr Goodwin is like to find little shelter for his apostasy in this assertion of the apostle: and besides, whatever be the importance of the word, the apostle mentions not any thing but his conscientious, diligent use of the means for the attaining of an end, which end yet may fully be promised of God to be so brought about and accomplished.

Mr Goodwin tells us, indeed, "That the word ἀδόκιμος is in the writings of the apostle constantly translated "reprobate," as Rom. i. 28, 2 Cor. xiii. 5–7, 2 Tim. iii. 8, Tit. i. 16, or is expressed by a word equivalent, as Heb. vi. 8." How rightly this is done, in his judgment, he tells us not; that it is so done serves his turn, and he hath no cause farther to trouble himself about it. The truth is, in most of the places intimated, the word is so restrained, either from the causes of the thing expressed, as Rom. i. 28, or the conditions of the persons of whom it is affirmed, with some adjunct in the use of it, as 2 Tim. iii. 8, Tit. i. 16, that it necessarily imports a disallow-

ance or rejection of God as to the whole state and condition wherein they are of whom it is asserted, joined with a profligate disposition to farther abominations in themselves; but that in any place it imports what Mr Goodwin would wrest it here unto, "a man finally rejected of God,"—whatever may be the thought of others, he will not assert. And whatever the translation be, I would know of him whether, in any place where the word is used, he doth indeed understand it in any other sense than that which here he opposes: only with this difference, that in other places it regards the general condition and state of them concerning whom it is affirmed; here, only the condition of a man, restrained to the particular case of labouring in the ministry, which is under consideration. 2 Cor. xiii. 5–7, the word cannot be extended any farther than to signify a condition of men when they are not accepted nor approved; which is the sense of the word contended for: nor yet Heb. vi. 8, though it be attended with those several qualifications of "nigh unto cursing," etc. The apostle, ascending by degrees in the description of the state of the unfruitful, barren land, says first it is ἀδόκιμος, or disallowed by the husbandman, as that which he hath spent his cost and labour about in vain; so that not only the original, first signification of the word (as is known) stands for the sense contended for, but it is also evidently restrained to that sense by the context, design, and scope of the place, with the intendment of the apostle therein, the word being the same that [is used] in all other places of the writings of the same apostle, unless where it is measured as to its extent and compass by some adjoined expression, which is interpretive of it as to the particular place, being still of the same signification.

Mr Goodwin's ensuing discourse is concerning the judgment of expositors upon the place, particularly naming Chrysostom, Calvin, Musculus, Diodati, the English annotators; of whom, notwithstanding, not any one doth appear for him, so unhappy is he in his quotations, though sundry of good note (and amongst them Piscator himself) do interpret the word in the sense by him contended for, knowing full well that it may be allowed in its utmost significancy without the least prejudice to the doctrine of the saints' perseverance, as hath been manifested. Of those mentioned by Mr Goodwin, there is not any one, from first to last, but restrained the word to the reproachableness or irreproachableness of the apostle in the discharge of the work of the ministry; the sense of it which we also insist upon. To spend time and labour in searching the expressions of particular men, weighing and considering the coherences, design, and circumstances of their writings, is beside my intention. The judgment of what hath been affirmed is left to the intelligent reader who supposeth it of his concernment to inquire particularly into it.

What is added of the scope of the place, sect. 15, p. 280,

alone requires any farther consideration. This, then, he thus proposeth:—

"5. The scope of the place, from verse 23, evinceth the legitimacy of such a sense in both above all contradiction; for the apostle, having asserted this for the reason, motive, and end, why he had made himself a servant to all men, in bearing with all men's humours and weaknesses in the course of his ministry, namely, that he might be partaker of the gospel (that is, of the saving benefit or blessing of the gospel) with them, verse 23, and again, that what he did he did to obtain an incorruptible crown, verse 25, plainly showeth that that which he sought to prevent, by running and fighting at such a high rate as he did, was not the blame and disparagement of some such misbehaviour, under which, notwithstanding, he might retain the saving love of God, but the loss of his part and portion in the gospel, and of that incorruptible crown which he sought, by that severe hand which he still held over himself, to obtain."

Ans. The scope of the place was before manifested, in answer to its dependence on the whole discourse foregoing, from verse 15, where the apostle enters upon the relation of his deportment in the work and service of the gospel, with a particular eye to his carriage therein as to his use or forbearance of the allowance of temporal things from them to whom he preached; which was due to him by all the right whereby any claim in any kind whatever may be pursued, together with the express institution of the Lord Jesus Christ, by him before laid down. In this course he behaved himself with wisdom, zeal, and diligence, having many glorious aims in his eye, as also being full of a sense of the duty incumbent on him, verse 16; to whose performance he was constrained by the law of Jesus Christ, as he also here expresses. Among other things that provoked him to and supported him in his hard labour and travail, was the love he bare to the gospel, and that he might have fellowship with others in the propagation and declaration of the glorious message thereof. This is his intendment, verse 23, τοῦτο δέ, etc. For the gospel's sake, or the love he bare to it, he desired with others to be partaker of it; —that is, of the excellent work of preaching of it; for of the benefit of the gospel he might have been partaker with other believers, though he had never been set apart to its promulgation. In his whole discourse he still speaks accommodately to his business in hand, for the describing of his work of apostleship in preaching the glorious gospel of Jesus Christ; and as to the end of this work, he acquaints us that there was proposed before him the incorruptible crown of his Master's approbation (upon his lawful running and striving in the way of the ministry whereto he was called),—the peculiar glory of them whom he is pleased to employ in his service. And though the cause of his fighting at that rate as he did was not wholly the fear of

non-approbation in that work, a necessity of duty being incumbent on him which he was to discharge, yet he that knows how to value the crown of approbation from Christ, the holy angels, and the church, of having faithfully discharged the office of a steward in dispensing the things of God, will think it sufficiently effectual to stir up any one to the utmost expense of love, pains, and diligence, that he may not come short of it. And of Mr Goodwin's proof this is the issue.

His next is from Heb. vi. 4–8, with x. 26–29, which he brings in attended with the ensuing discourse, sect. 18:—

"The next passage we shall insist upon to evince the possibility of a final defection in the saints openeth itself in these words: 'For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted of the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, if they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame. For the earth which drinketh in the rain that cometh oft upon it, and bringeth forth herbs meet for them by whom it is dressed, receiveth blessing from God: but that which beareth thorns and briers is rejected, and is nigh unto cursing; whose end is to be burned.' Answerable hereunto is another in the same epistle: 'For if we sin wilfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries. He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses: of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?' Evident it is that in these two passages the Holy Ghost, after a serious manner, and with a very pathetic and moving strain of speech and discourse (scarce the like to be found in all the Scriptures), admonisheth those who are at present true believers to take heed of relapsing into the ways of their former ignorance and impiety. This caveat or admonition he presseth by an argument of this import, that in case they shall thus relapse, there will be very little or no hope at all of their recovery, or return to the estate of faith and grace wherein now they stand. Before the faces of such sayings and passages as these, rightly understood and duly considered, there is no standing for that doctrine which denies a possibility either of a total or of a final defection of the saints. But this light also is darkened in the heavens by the interposition of the veils of these two exceptions:—1. That the apostle in the said passages affirms nothing positively concerning the falling away of those he speaks of, but only conditionally and upon suppo-

sition. 2. That he doth not speak of true and sound believers, but of hypocrites, and such who had faith only in show, not in substance. The former of these exceptions hath been already non-suited, and that by some of the ablest patrons themselves of the cause of perseverance; where we were taught from a pen of that learning, that 'such conditional sayings upon which admonitions, promises, or threatenings are built, do at least suppose something in possibility, however, by virtue of their tenor and form, they suppose nothing in being.' But,—

"As to the places in hand, there is not any hypothetical sign or conditional particle to be found in either of them as they come from the Holy Ghost and are carried in the original. Those two 'ifs' appearing in the English translation, the one in the former place, the other in the latter, show, it may be, the translators' inclination to the cause, but not their faithfulness in their engagement,—an infirmity whereunto they were very subject, as we shall have occasion to take notice of the second time ere long, in another instance of the like partiality. But the tenor of both the passages in hand is so ordered by the apostle, that he plainly declares how great and fearful the danger is or will be when believers do or shall fall away, not if or in case they shall fall away."

Ans. Of the two answers which, as himself signifieth, are usually given to the objections from these places of Scripture, that Mr Goodwin doth not fairly acquit his hands of either will quickly appear:—

1. To the first, that the form of speech used by the apostle in both places is conditional, whence there is no argument to the event without begging the thing in question, or supposal that the condition in all respects may be fulfilled, where it requires only, to the constitution of it as a condition in the place of arguing wherein it is used, that it may be possible in some only,—he opposeth, "That some of them who have wrote for the 'doctrine of the saints' perseverance' have disclaimed the use of it, as to its application to the place in Ezekiel formerly considered." But yet, leaving them to the liberty of their judgment who are so minded, that the reason given by them, and here again repeated by Mr Goodwin, doth not in the least enforce any to let go this answer to the objection proposed that shall be pleased to insist upon it, hath been manifested.

To this Mr Goodwin farther adds that weighty observation, that the word "if" is not in the original; and thence takes occasion to fall foul upon the translators as having corrupted the passages, out of favour to the doctrine contended for. I wish they had never worse mistaken, nor showed more partiality in any other place. For, first, will Mr Goodwin say that a proposition cannot be hypothetical, nor an expression conditional, unless the word "if" be expressed? Were it worth the labour, instances might abundantly be given him

in that language whereof we speak to the contrary. He that shall say to him as he is journeying, "Going the right hand way, you will meet with thieves," may be doubtless said to speak conditionally, no less than he that should expressly tell him, "If you go the way on the right hand, you shall meet with thieves." Secondly, what clear sense and significancy can be given the words without the supplement of the conditional conjunction, or some other term equipollent thereunto, Mr Goodwin hath not declared. "For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened," etc., "and they falling away," as the words ("verbum de verbo") lie in the text, is scarce in English a congruous or significant expression; yea, καὶ παραπεσόντας, in the syntax and coherence wherein it lies, is most properly and directly rendered, "If they fall away," as is also the force of the expression, chap. x. 26. Yea, thirdly, the corruption of the translation mentioned by Mr Goodwin doth not in the least relieve him as to the delivery of the words from a sense hypothetical. "When they fall away" (though his "when" be no more in the text than the translators' "if"), doth either include a supposition that they shall and must fall away certainly, and so requires the event of the thing whereof it is spoken, or it is expressive only of the condition whereon the event is suspended. If it be taken in the first sense, all believers must fall away; if in the latter, none may, notwithstanding any thing in this text (so learnedly restored to its true significancy), the words only pointing at the connection that is between apostasy and punishment. Notwithstanding, then, any thing here offered to the contrary, those who affirm that nothing can certainly be concluded from these places for the apostasy of any, be they who they will that are intended in them, because they are conditional assertions, manifesting only the connection between the sin and punishment expressed, need not be ashamed of nor recoil from their affirmation in the least.

For mine own part, I confess I do not in any measure think it needful to insist upon the conditionals of these assertions of the Holy Ghost, as to the removal of any or all the oppositions that from them, of old or of late, have been raised and framed against the doctrine of the saints' perseverance, there being in neither of the texts insisted on either name or thing inquired after, nor any one of all the severals inquired into, and constantly in the Scriptures used, in the description of the saints and believers of whom we speak. This I shall briefly in the first place demonstrate, and then proceed with the consideration of what is offered by Mr Goodwin in opposition thereunto. Some few observations will lead us through the first part of this work designed. I say then,—

1. There is an inferior, common work of the Holy Ghost, in the dispensation of the word, upon many to whom it is preached, causing in them a great alteration and change as to *light, knowledge, abili*

ties, gifts, affections, life, and conversation, when the persons so wrought upon are not quickened, regenerate, nor made new creatures, nor united to Jesus Christ. I suppose there will not be need for me to insist on the proof of this proposition, the truth of it being notoriously known and confessed, as I suppose, amongst all that profess the name of Christ.

2. That in persons thus wrought upon, there is, or may be, such an *assent,* upon light and conviction, to the truths proposed and preached to them as is *true in its kind,* not counterfeit, giving and affording them in whom it is wrought profession of the faith, and that sometimes with constancy to the death, or the giving of their bodies to be burned, with persuasions (whence they are called "believers") of a future enjoyment of a glorious and blessed condition, and filling them with ravished affections and rejoicings in hope, which they profess suitable to the expectation they have of such a state and condition. This also might be easily evinced by innumerable instances and examples from the Scripture, if need required.

3. That the persons in and upon whom this work is wrought cannot be said to be *hypocrites* in the most proper sense of that word, —that is, such as counterfeit and pretend themselves to be that which they know they are not,—nor to have faith only in show and not in substance, as though they made a show and pretence only of an assent to the things they professed; their high gifts, knowledge, faith, change of affections and conversation, being in their own kind true (as the faith of devils is): and yet, notwithstanding all this, they are in bondage, and at best seek for a righteousness as it were by the works of the law, and in the issue Christ proves to them of none effect.

4. That among these persons many are oftentimes endued with excellent gifts, lovely parts, qualifications, and abilities, rendering them exceedingly useful, acceptable, and serviceable to the church of God, becoming vessels in his house to hold and convey to others the precious liquor of the gospel, though their nature in themselves be not changed, they remaining wood and stone still.

5. That much of the work wrought in and upon this sort of persons by the Spirit and word lies, in its own nature, in a direct tendency to their relinquishment of their sins and self-righteousness, and to a closing with God in Christ, having a mighty prevalency upon them to cause them to amend their ways, and to labour after life and salvation; from which to apostatize and fall off, upon the account of the tendency mentioned of these beginnings, is *dangerous,* and for the most part *pernicious.*

6. That persons under convictions and works of the Spirit formerly mentioned, partakers of the gifts, light, and knowledge spoken of, with those other endowments attending them, are capacitated for

the sin against the Holy Ghost, or the unpardonable apostasy from God.

These things being commonly known, and, as far as I know, universally granted, I affirm that the persons mentioned and intended in these places are such as have been now described, and not the believers or saints, concerning whom alone our contest is.

Mr Goodwin replies, sect. 19, p. 283:—

"To the latter exception, which pretends to find only hypocrites, and not true believers, staged in both passages, we likewise answer, that it glosseth no whit better than the former, if not much worse, considering that the persons presented in the said passages are described by such characters and signal excellencies which the Scriptures are wont to appropriate unto saints and true believers, and that when they intend to show them in the best and greatest of their glory. What we say herein will, I suppose, be made above all gainsaying by instancing particulars."

Ans. That this is most remote from truth, and that there is not here any one discriminating character of true believers, so far are the expressions from setting them out in any signal eminency, will appear from these ensuing considerations:—

1. There is no mention of faith or believing, either in express terms or in terms of an equivalent significancy, in either of the places mentioned; therefore true believers are not the persons intended to be described in these places. Did the Holy Ghost intend to describe believers, it is very strange that he should not call them so, nor make mention of any one of those principles in them from whence and whereby they are such. Wherefore, I say,—

2. There is not any thing ascribed here to the persons spoken of which belongs peculiarly to true believers, as such, or that constitutes them to be such, and which yet are things plainly and positively asserted and described in innumerable other places of Scripture. That the persons described are "called according to the purpose of God, quickened, born again or regenerated, justified, united to Christ, sanctified by the Spirit, adopted, made sons of God," and the like, which are the usual expressions of believers, pointing out their discriminating form as such, is not in the least intimated in the text, context, or any concernment of it. That they are elected of God, redeemed of Christ, sanctified by the Spirit, that they are made holy, is not at all affirmed.

3. The persons intended are, chap. vi., verses 7, 8, compared to the ground upon which the rain falls, and [which yet] beareth "thorns and briers." True believers, whilst they are so, are not such as do bring forth nothing but "thorns and briers," faith itself being an "herb meet for Him by whom they are dressed."

4. "Things that accompany salvation" are "better things" than

any [which] in the persons mentioned were to be found. This the apostle asserts, verse 9, "We are persuaded better things of you, and things that accompany salvation." Now, neither of these, neither "better things," nor "things that accompany salvation," were upon them whose apostasy the apostle supposeth. The exceptive particle at the entrance, with the apologetical design of the whole verse, ascribes such things to the saints, to whom the apostle speaks, as they were not partakers of concerning whom he had immediately before discoursed. The "faith of God's elect," whereby we are justified, is doubtless of the "things that accompany salvation."

5. The persons intended by the apostle were such as "had need to be taught again the first principles of the oracles of God," chap. v. 12; that were "unskilful in the word of righteousness," verse 13; that had not their "senses exercised to discern both good and evil," verse 14; and are plainly distinguished from them to whom the promise made to Abraham doth properly belong, chap. vi. 9–14, etc.

6. True believers are opposed, in the discourse of the apostle, chap. vi., unto these persons lying under a possibility of apostasy, so far as they are cast under it, by the conditional discourse of it, upon sundry accounts: as, of their "work and labour of love" showed to the name of God, verse 10; of their preservation, from the righteousness or faithfulness of God in his promises, verse 10; of the immutability of the counsel of God, and his oath for the preservation of them, verses 13, 17, 18; of their sure and steadfast anchor of hope, verse 19, etc. Upon all which considerations, it is abundantly evident that they are not believers, the children of God, justified, sanctified, adopted, saints, of whom the apostle treats in the passages insisted on.

Sect. 28, Mr Goodwin urges sundry reasons to prove that "they are not hypocrites or outside professors only, but true believers, that are described." If by "hypocrites and outside professors" he intends those who are grossly so, pretending to be what they are not, and what they know themselves not to be, we contend not about it. If in these expressions he compriseth also those whom we characterized in the entrance of this discourse, who unto their profession of the faith have also added those gifts and endowments, with the like, which we mentioned, but who, notwithstanding all their advancement in light, conviction, joy, usefulness, [and] conversation, do yet come short of union with Christ, I shall join issue with him in the consideration of his reasons offered to be "pregnant of proof" for the confirmation of his assertion. He tells you, sect. 28, p. 288:—

"First, There is no clause, phrase, or word, in either of the places, any ways characteristical or descriptive of hypocrisy or hypocrites. There are none of those colours to be seen which are wont to be used in drawing or limning the portraitures or shapes of those beasts, as

distinguished from creatures of a better kind. All the lineaments of the persons presented in these tables, before the mention of their falling away, become the best and fairest faces of the saints (as hath been proved), and are not to be found in any other. Yea, the greatest and most intelligent believer under heaven hath no reason but to desire part and fellowship with the 'hypocrites' here described, in all those characters and properties which are attributed unto them before their falling away or sinning wilfully."

Ans. 1. The design of the apostle is not to discover or give any characters of hypocrites, to manifest them to be such, but to declare the excellencies that are or may be found in them, from the enjoyment of all which they may decline, and sin against the mercy and grace of them, to the aggravation of their condemnation; neither had any lines used to particularize those "beasts" in their shape, wherein they differ from believers, been at all useful to the apostle's purpose, his aim being only to draw those wherein they are like them and conformable to them. Neither,—

2. Is it questioned whether those things here mentioned may be found in true believers, and become them very well, rendering their faces beautiful; but whether there be not something else than what is here mentioned, that should give them being as such, and life, without which these things are little better than painting. Nor,—

3. Is it at all to the purpose that believers may desire a participation in those characters with the persons described; but whether they who have no other characters or marks upon them of true believers than what are here mentioned must necessarily be so accounted, or will of God be so accepted. Many a believer may desire the gifts of those hypocrites, who have not one dram of the grace wherewith he is quickened. So that this first reason, as pregnant as it seems of proof, is only indeed swelled and puffed up with wind and vanity. He adds,—

"Secondly, True believers are in an estate of honour, and are lifted up on high towards the heavens; in which respect they have from whence to fall: but hypocrites are as near hell already as lightly they can be, till they be actually fallen into it; from whence, then, are they capable of falling? Men of estates may fail and break, but beggars are in no such danger. If hypocrites fall away, it must be from their hypocrisy; but this is rather a rising than a fall. A beggar cannot be said to break, but only when he gets an estate. When he doth this, the beggar is broke."

Ans. All that here is added arises merely from the ambiguity of the word "hypocrites." The persons that fall are on all hands supposed to have and enjoy all that is made mention of in the texts insisted on; so that they have so much to fall from as that thereupon Mr Goodwin thinks them true believers. They have all the heights

to tumble from which we before mentioned, and very many others that it is no easy task to declare. They fall from the excellencies they have, and not from the hypocrisy with which they are vitiated,—from the profession of the faith, with honesty of conversation, etc., not from the want of root or being built on the rock. So that this pretended "pregnant reason" is as barren as the former to the proving of the assertion laid down to be proved by it. He adds,—

"Thirdly, It is no punishment at all to hypocrites to be under no possibility of being 'renewed again by repentance:' nay, in case they should 'fall away,' it would be a benefit and blessing unto them to be under an impossibility of being 'renewed again;' for if this were their case, it would be impossible for them to be ever hypocrites again, and doubtless it is no great judgment upon any man to be incapable of such a preferment."

Ans. Whether it be no punishment for them who have been in so good a way, a way of such tendency unto salvation and such usefulness to the gospel, as those persons are supposed to be in, not to be renewed again to that state and condition, but to be shut up unrecoverably under the power of darkness and unbelief unto eternal wrath, when before they were in a fair way for life and salvation, others will judge besides Mr Goodwin. Neither is there an affirmation of their falling away from their hypocrisy, and being renewed again thereunto, in any thing we assert in the exposition of this place, but their falling away from gifts and common graces, with the impossibility, of what kind soever it be, of being renewed to an enjoyment of them any more. His fourth and last attempt follows.

"Fourthly, and lastly, It stands off forty foot at least from all probability, that the apostle, writing only unto those whom he judged true and sound believers (as appears from several places in the epistle, as chap. iii. 14, vi. 9, etc.), should, in the most serious, emphatical, and weighty passages hereof, admonish them of such evils or dangers which only concerned other men, and whereunto themselves were not at all obnoxious; yea, and whereunto if they had been obnoxious, all the cautions, admonitions, warnings, threatenings in the world, would not (according to their principles with whom we have now to do) have relieved or delivered them. To say that such admonitions are a means to preserve those from apostasy who are by other means (as suppose the absolute decree of God, or the interposal of his irresistible power for their perseverance, or the like) in no possibility of apostatizing, is to say that washing is a means to make snow white, or the rearing up of a pillar in the air a means to keep the heavens from falling. But more of this in the chapter following."

Ans. What exact measure soever Mr Goodwin seemeth to have taken of the distance of our assertion from "all probability" (which he hath accurately performed, if we may take his word), yet, upon due

consideration, it evidently appears that he is not able to disprove it from coming close up to the absolute truth of the meaning and scope of the Holy Ghost in the places under consideration: for, besides what hath been already argued and proved, it is evident,—

1. That the apostle wrote promiscuously to all that profess the name of Christ and his gospel; of whom he tells you, chap. iii. 14 (one of the places we are directed to by Mr Goodwin), that those only are made "partakers of Christ who hold the beginning of their confidence steadfast unto the end;" [as] for the rest, notwithstanding all their glorious profession, gifts, and attainments, yet they are not truly made partakers of Christ (whereby he cuts the throat of Mr Goodwin's whole cause); and chap. vi. 9, that there were amongst them [those] who had attained "things accompanying salvation," and "better things" than any of those had done, who, notwithstanding their profession, yet held it not fast without wavering, but every day fell away: so that though he judged no particulars before their apostasy, yet he partly intimates that all professors were not true believers; and therefore does teach them all to make sure work in closing with Christ, lest they turn apostates, and perish in so doing.

2. That conditional comminations and threatenings, discovering the connection that is between the antecedent and consequent that is in the proposition of them, are and may be of use to the saints of God, preserved from the end threatened and the cause deserving it, upon the accounts, reasons, and causes, that have been plentifully insisted on, hath more than once been declared, and the objections to the contrary (the same with those here insisted on) answered and removed. This being all that Mr Goodwin hath to offer by the way of reason to exclude the persons formerly described to be the only concernment of the places of Scripture insisted on, there remains nothing but only the consideration of the severals of the passages debated; wherein, by the light that hath already broken forth from the circumstances, aims, ends, and connection of the places, we may so far receive direction as not to be at all stumbled in our progress.

With the consideration of the several expressions in the passages under debate Mr Goodwin proceedeth, sect. 19, and first insisteth on that of chap. vi. 4, where it is said that they were ἅπαξ φωτισθέντες, "once enlightened;" whence he thus argues:—

"Believers are said to be 'enlightened,' and to be 'children of light,' and to be 'light in the Lord,' 2 Cor. iv. 6; Heb. x. 32; Luke xvi. 8; Eph. v. 8: therefore they who here are said to be 'enlightened' were true believers."

Ans. 1. I shall not insist upon the various interpretations of this place, and readings of the word φωτισθέντες, very many, and that not improbably, affirming that their participation of the ordinance of baptism is here only intended by it; for which exposition much might

be offered, were it needful or much conducing to our business in hand. Nor,—

2. Shall I labour to manifest that persons may be enlightened, and yet never come to Christ savingly by faith, to attain union with him and justification by him;—a thing Mr Goodwin will not deny himself; or if he should, it were a very facile thing to convince him of his mistake by a sole entreaty (if he would be pleased to give an account of his faith in this business at our entreaty) of him to declare what he intends by "illumination;" whence it would quickly appear how unsuitable it is to his own principles to deny that it may be in them who yet never come to be, or at least by virtue thereof may not be said to be, true believers. But this only I shall add,—

3. That Mr Goodwin, doubtless knowing that this argument (which, with all the texts of Scripture whereby he illustrates it, he borrows of the Remonstrants) hath been again and again excepted against as illogical and unconcluding, and inconsistent with the principles of them that use it, ought not crudely again to have imposed it upon his reader without some attempt at least to free it from the charge of impertinency, weakness, and folly, wherewith it is burdened. "Illumination is ascribed to believers; illumination is ascribed to these men: therefore these persons are believers." A little consideration will recover to Mr Goodwin's mind the force of this argument, so far as that he will scarce use it any more.

Sect. 20, he takes up another expression, from chap. x. 26, that they are said to receive ἐπίγνωσιν τῆς ἀληθείας,—"the acknowledgment of the truth;" whence he argues in the same manner and form as he had newly done from the term of "illumination." Ἐπίγνωσις ἀληθείας is ascribed to believers; therefore they are all so to whom it is ascribed.

But he tells you, in particular, sect. 20, "That, in the latter of the said passages, the persons spoken of are said to have received ἐπίγνωσιν τῆς ἀληθείας,—that is, 'the acknowledgment of the truth;' which expression doth not signify the bare notion of what the gospel teacheth, of which they are capable who are the most professed enemies thereof, but such a consenting and subjection thereunto which worketh effectually in men to a separating of themselves from sin and sinners. This is the constant import of the phrase in the Scriptures."

Ans. All this may be granted, yet nothing hence concluded to evince the persons to whom it is ascribed to be true believers. Men may be so wrought upon and convinced by the word and Spirit, sent forth to "convince the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment," as to acknowledge the truth of the gospel, to profess subjection to the gospel, and to yield to it so far as to separate themselves from

sin and sinners, in such a manner and to such a degree (not dissembling, but answering their convictions) as to bless themselves oftentimes in their own condition, and to obtain an esteem with the people of God to be such indeed as they profess themselves to be, and yet come short of that union and communion with the Lord Christ which all true believers are made partakers of. It is not of any use or importance to examine the particular places mentioned by Mr Goodwin, wherein, as he supposeth, the expression of the "knowledge" or "acknowledgment of the truth" denotes that which is saving, and comprehendeth true faith, unless he had attempted to prove from them that the word could signify nothing else, or that a man might not be brought to an acknowledgment of the truth but that he must of necessity be a true believer; neither of which he doth, or if he did, could he possibly give any seeming probability to. There may be a *knowing* of the things of the gospel in men, and yet they may come short of the happiness of them that *do* them; there is a knowledge of Christ that yet is barren as to the fruit of holiness.

In the next place, the persons queried about are said to be "sanctified by the blood of the covenant." Of this Mr Goodwin says, sect. 21, "That is, by their sprinkling herewith, to be separated from such who refuse this sprinkling, as likewise from the pollutions and defilements of the world. To be 'sanctified,' when applied unto persons, is not found in any other sense throughout the New Testament, unless it be where persons bear the consideration of things, 1 Cor. vii. 14. But of this signification of the word, which we claim in this place, instances are so frequent and obvious that we shall not need to mention any."

Ans. 1. If no more be intended in this expression but what Mr Goodwin gives us in the exposition of it,—namely, that they are so sprinkled with it as to be "separated from them that refuse this sprinkling" (that is openly), "as likewise from the pollutions and defilements of the world,"—we shall not need to contend about it; for men may be so sprinkled, and have such an efficacy of conviction come upon them by the preaching of the cross and blood-shedding of Christ, as to be separated from those who professedly despise it and the open publication of the word, and yet be far from having "consciences purged from dead works to serve the living God." And,—

2. That the term of "sanctifying," when applied to persons, is not used in any other sense than what is by Mr Goodwin here expressed, is an assertion that will be rendered useless until Mr Goodwin be pleased to give it an edge by explaining in what sense he here intends to apply it. Of the term "sanctifying" there are, as hath been declared, two more eminent and known significations:—First, To *separate* from common use, state, or condition, to dedicate, consecrate, and set apart to God, by profession of his will, in a peculiar manner,

is frequently so expressed. Secondly, Really to *purify*, cleanse with spiritual purity, opposed to the defilement of sin, is denoted thereby. In the exposition given of the place here used by Mr Goodwin, he mentions both,—separation, and that chiefly, as the nature of the sanctification whereof he speaks, as also some kind of spiritual cleansing from sin; but in what sense he precisely would have us to understand him he doth not tell us.

I somewhat question whether it be used in the Epistle to the Hebrews in any other sense than the former, which was the Temple sense of the word, the apostle using many terms of the old worship in their first signification;—however, that it is used in that sense in the New Testament, appropriated to persons, without any such respect as that mentioned by Mr Goodwin, is sufficiently evinced by that of our Saviour, John xvii. 19, ὑπὲρ αὐτῶν ἐγὼ ἁγιάζω ἐμαυτόν, expressing his *dedicating* and separating himself to his office; and more instances may be had, if we stood in any need of them.

3. That many are said to be sanctified and holy in the latter sense, as it signifieth spiritual purity, in respect of their profession of themselves so to be, and some men's esteem of them, who yet were never wholly and truly purged from their sin, nor ever had received the Holy Spirit of promise, who alone is able to purge their hearts, doth not now want its demonstration; that work hath been some while since performed. So that Mr Goodwin makes not any progress at all in the proof of what he has undertaken,—namely, that they are true believers, in the sense of that denomination which we assert, who in these places are described. For a close, ἐν ᾧ ἡγιάσθη is far more properly referred to Christ than to the persons spoken of; and that sense the Remonstrants themselves do not oppose.

That they are said, chap. vi. 4, to have "tasted of the heavenly gift" is urged in the next place, sect. 22, to prove them true believers. Both the object and the act are here in question,—what is meant by the "heavenly gift," and what by "tasting" of it. I shall not look into the text beyond the peculiar concernment of the cause in hand; somewhat might be offered for the farther clearing of the one and other. At present it sufficeth, that, be the "heavenly gift" what it will, the persons of our contest are said only to "taste" of it; which, though absolutely and in itself it is not an extenuating expression, but denotes a matter of high aggravation of the sin of apostasy, in that they were admitted to some taste and relish of the excellency and sweetness of the heavenly gift, yet comparatively to their feeding on it, digesting it, growing thereby, it clearly denotes their coming short of such a participation of it who do but taste of it. That to taste doth not, in the first genuine signification, in things natural, signify to eat and digest meat, so as to grow by it, I suppose needs no proof: that in that sense it is used in the Scriptures, John ii. 9,

Matt. xxvii. 34, is by Mr Goodwin confessed. This he tells you "is only when the taste or relish of things is desired to be known;" but that our Saviour tasted of the gall and vinegar out of a desire to know the relish of it, he will hardly persuade those who are accustomed to give never so easy a belief to his assertions. By the "heavenly gift" Mr Goodwin in the first place intends Jesus Christ. Now, if by tasting, eating and drinking of Christ be intended, as is here pleaded, Christ himself will determine this strife, telling us that whosoever eateth his flesh shall be saved, John vi. 35, 49–51, 53–57. So that either to taste is not to eat, or they that taste cannot perish.

Three things are urged by Mr Goodwin to give proof of his interpretation of these words of the Holy Ghost. Saith he:—

1. "Whatsoever is meant by this 'heavenly gift,' certain is it that by 'tasting' is not meant any light or superficial impression made upon the hearts or souls of men, through the sense or apprehension of it, but an emphatical, inward, and affectuous relish and sense of the excellent and heavenly sweetness and pleasantness of it, opposed to a bare speculation or naked apprehension thereof. The reason hereof is clear, viz., because the tasting of this heavenly gift here spoken of is not mentioned by the apostle in a way of easing or extenuating the sin of those that should fall away from Christ, but by way of aggravation and exaggeration of the heinousness and unreasonableness thereof, and withal more fully to declare and assert the equitableness of that severity in God which is here denounced against those that shall sin the great sin of apostasy here spoken of. It must needs be much more unworthy and provoking in the sight of God for a man to turn his back upon and renounce those ways, that profession, wherein God hath come home to him, and answered the joy of his heart abundantly, than it would be in case he had only heard of great matters, and had his head filled, but had really found and felt nothing with his heart and soul truly excellent and glorious.

2. "And besides, the very word itself, *to taste*, ordinarily in Scripture imports a real communion with, or participation and enjoyment (if the thing be good) of, that which was said to be tasted. 'O taste and see,' saith David, 'that the LORD is good,' Ps. xxxiv. 8. His intent, doubtless, was, not to invite men to a slight or superficial taste of the goodness of God, but to a real, cordial, and thorough experiment and satisfactory enjoyment of it. So when he that made the great invitation in the parable expressed himself thus to his servants, 'For I say unto you, That none of those which were bidden shall taste of my supper,' Luke xiv. 24, his meaning clearly was, that they should not partake of the sweetness and benefit with those who should accept of his invitation and come unto it. In like manner, when Peter speaketh thus to his Christian Jews, 'If so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious,' 1 Pet. ii. 3, his meaning

(questionless) is, not to press his exhortation, directed unto them in the former verse, upon a consideration of any light or vanishing taste, such as hypocrites and false-hearted Christians may have, of the graciousness of the Lord, but of such a taste wherein they had had a real, inward, and sensible experiment thereof.

3. "And besides, according to the sense of our adversaries in the present debate, if the taste of the heavenly gift we speak of should imply no more but only a faint or weak perception of the sweetness and glorious excellency of it, yet even this may be sufficient to evince truth of grace and faith in men: for their opinion is, that a man may be a true believer with a grain of mustard-seed only,—that is, with a very slender relish and taste of spiritual things; yea, their sense is, that in some cases of desertion, and under the guilt of some enormous courses, they may have little or no taste of them at all."

Ans. To the first discourse, considering what hath been already delivered, I shall only add, that although it be no aggravation of the sin of apostasy that they who fall into it have but "tasted of the heavenly gift," yet it is that they have tasted of it. That taste of its relish, preciousness, and sweetness, which they have obtained, whereby they are distinguished from them whose blindness and hardness keep them up to a total disrelish and contempt of it, is abundantly enough to render their sin heinous and abominable. When men, by the preaching of the word, shall be startled in their sins, troubled in their consciences, forced to seek out for a remedy, and shall come so far as to have some (though but a light) taste of the excellency of the gospel and the remedy provided for sinners in Jesus Christ; and then, through the strength of their lusts and corruptions, shall cast it off, reject it, and spit out of their mouth, as it were, all that of it whereby they found the least savour in it,—no creature under heaven can be guilty of more abominable undervaluing of the Lord Christ and the love of God in him than such persons. What degree of love, joy, repentance, peace, faith, persons many times arrive unto, when, with Herod, they have "heard the word gladly, and done many things willingly," etc., hath been by others abundantly demonstrated. This sufficeth our present purpose, that they do make such a progress in the ways of God, and find so much excellency in the treasure of grace and mercy which he hath provided in Jesus Christ, and [which he] tenders in the gospel, that he cannot but look upon their apostasy and renunciation of him (whereby they proclaim to all the world, as much as in them lies, that there is not that real goodness, worth, and excellency to be found in him as some pretend) as the highest scorn and contempt of him and his love in Christ; and [he] revenges it accordingly.

To the second, which consists of instances collected by the Remonstrants to manifest the use of the word "tasting" to be other

than what we here confine it to, I say, first, that the word, as it is applied to spirituals, being borrowed and metaphorical, not in its analogy to be extended beyond making trial for our coming to some knowledge of a thing in its nature, the use of it in one place cannot prescribe to the sense of it in another, no more than any other metaphorical expression whatever; but it must, in the several places of its residence, be interpreted according to the most peculiar restriction that the matter treated of doth require. If, then, Mr Goodwin can prove that any thing in this place under consideration enforces such a sense, all his other instances are needless; if he cannot, they are useless.

It might easily be manifested, and hath been done by others already, that in all the places mentioned by Mr Goodwin, the word is not expressly significant of any thorough, solid eating and participation of that which is said to be tasted, as is pretended. But to manifest this is not our concernment, there being no reason in the world to enforce any such sense as is contended for in the place under present consideration.

To the third, wherein he argues, with his predecessors, from our opinion concerning faith, a brief reply will suffice. That "a faint, weak perception and relish of heavenly things," is sufficient to make a man a believer, is so far from being our opinion that we utterly disclaim them from being believers to whom this is ascribed, if nothing else be added in their description from whence they may be so esteemed. It is true, faith is sometimes little and weak in the exercise of it; yea, a man may be so overtaken with temptations, or so clouded under desertions, as that it may not deport itself with any such considerable vigour as to be consolatory to him in whom it is, or demonstrative of him unto others to be what he is: but we say, that the weakest, lowest, meanest measure and degree of this faith, is yet grounded and fixed in the heart, where, though it be not always alike lively and active, yet it is always alive and gives life. How far believers may fall into the guilt of "enormous courses" has been already manifested. The intendment of the expression is to disadvantage the persuasion he opposeth. We do not grant that believers may fall into any enormities, but only what God himself affirms they may, and yet not utterly be cast out of his love and favour in Jesus Christ. Farther; the weakest faith of which we affirm that it may be true and saving, though it may have no great perception nor deep taste of heavenly things for the present, yet hath always that of adherence to God in Christ; which is exceedingly exalted above any such perception of heavenly things whatever that may be had or obtained without it. So that, from the consideration of what hath been spoken, we may safely conclude that Mr Goodwin hath not been able to advance one step in his intendment to prove that the persons here described are true believers.

I know no sufficient ground or reason to induce me to any large consideration of the other two or three expressions that remain, and that are insisted on by Mr Goodwin, seeing it is evident from their associates, which have been already examined, that there is none of them can speak one word to the business in hand. I shall therefore discharge them from any farther attendance in the service they have been forced unto.

The next privilege insisted on which to these persons is ascribed is, that they are "made partakers of the Holy Ghost." In men's participation of the Holy Ghost, either the gifts or graces of the Holy Ghost are intended. The graces of the Holy Ghost are either more *common* and *inchoative*, or *special* and *completing* of the work of conversion. That it is the peculiar, regenerating grace of God that is intended in this expression, of being "made partakers of the Holy Ghost," and not the gifts of the Spirit, or those common graces of illumination, unto which persons not truly converted, but only wrought upon by an effectual conviction in the preaching of the word, may attain, Mr Goodwin is no way able to prove. And there is also this consideration rising up with strength and power against that interpretation, namely, that those that are so made partakers of the Spirit as to be regenerated, quickened, sealed, comforted thereby,—which are some of the peculiar acts of his grace in and towards the souls of those that believe,—can never lose him nor be deprived of him (as was manifested before at large), being sealed and confirmed not only in the present enjoyment of the love and favour of God, but also unto the full fruition of the glory which is provided for them; and therefore [they] cannot fall away, as these are supposed to do. What there is in Mr Goodwin's discourse on this passage, sect. 23, 24, to weaken in the least what is usually answered, or farther to enforce his exposition of the place, I am not able to apprehend, and shall therefore proceed with what remaineth.

All that follows in the place of the apostle under contest is regulated by the word "taste:" "They have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come." What the sense and importance of that word is hath been already declared; neither can it be proved that the persons here described do so "taste the good word of God" as to mix the promises of it with faith, or of the "powers of the world to come" as to receive them in power in their hearts by believing: so that farther contest about these words seems to be altogether needless.

How far men may proceed in the ways of God; what progress they may make in amendment of life; what gifts and common graces they may receive; what light and knowledge they may be endued withal; what kind of faith, joy, repentance, sorrow, delight, love, they may have in and about spiritual things; what desires of mercy and heaven;

what useful gifts for the church's edification they may receive; how far they may persuade their own souls, and upon what grounds, that their condition God-ward is good and saving, and beget an opinion in others that they are true believers,—and yet come short of union with Christ, building their houses on the sand, etc., is the daily task of the preachers of the gospel to manifest, in their pressing that exhortation of the apostle unto their hearers, to "examine and try themselves," in the midst of their profession, "whether Christ be in them of a truth" or no. I shall not now enter upon that labour. The reader knows where to find enough, in the writings of holy and learned men of this nation, to evince that men may arrive at the utmost height of what is in this place of the apostle by the Holy Ghost ascribed to the persons of whom he speaks, and yet come short of the state of true believers. Mr Goodwin, indeed, tells us, sect. 27,—

"The premises relating to the two passages yet under debate considered, I am so far from questioning whether the apostle speaks of true and sound believers in them, that I verily judge that he purposely sought out several of the most emphatical and signal characters of believers, yea, such which are hardly, or rather not at all, to be found in the ordinary sort of true believers, but only in those that are most eminent amongst them;—that so he might give them to understand and consider that not true believers only, and such who though sound yet were weak in the faith, might fall away and perish, but that even such also who were lifted up nearer unto heaven than their fellows might, through carelessness and carnal security, dash themselves in pieces against the same stone, and make shipwreck of their souls as well as they."

Ans. 1. The house built on the sand may oftentimes be built higher, have more fair parapets and battlements, windows, and ornaments, than that which is built upon the rock; yet all gifts and privileges equal not one grace. In respect of light, knowledge, gifts, and many manifestations of the Spirit, such who never come up to that faith which gives real union and communion with Jesus Christ may far outgo those that do.

2. That there is any thing mentioned or any characters given of believers, much less such as are singular and not common to all, Mr Goodwin hath not in any measure been able to evince. There is not the meanest believer in the world but he is a child of God, and heir of the promises, and brother of the Lord Christ; hath union with him; hath his living in him; is quickened, justified, sanctified; hath Christ made to him wisdom, etc.; hath his righteousness in God, and his life hid in him in Christ; is passed from death to life, brings forth fruit; and is dear to God as the apple of his eye, accepted with him, approved of him as his temple, wherein he delighteth to dwell. That any thing in this place mentioned and insisted on, any cha-

racters we have given of the persons whom we have considered, do excel, or equal, or denote any thing in the same kind with these and the like excellencies of the meanest believers, will never be proved, if we may judge of future successes from the issue of all former attempts for that end and purpose.

And this is the issue of Mr Goodwin's third testimony produced to confirm the doctrine of the saints' apostasy, but hypothetically, and under such a form of expression as may not be argued from, nor of saints and true believers at all. His fourth followeth.

His fourth testimony he produceth, and endeavours to manage for the advantage of his cause, sect. 31, in these words:—

"The next Scripture testimony we shall produce and briefly urge in the cause now under maintenance is in the same epistle with the former, and speaketh these words: 'Now, the just shall live by faith; but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him.' Our English translators, out of good-will, doubtless, to a bad cause, have almost defaced this testimony, by substituting 'any man' for the 'just man:' for whereas they translate, 'But if any man draw back,' the original readeth, Καὶ ἐὰν ὑποστείληται· that is, 'And if,' or 'But if he,' that is, the just man, who should live by his faith, namely, if he continues in it, 'shall draw back.' Beza himself likewise, before them, had stained the honour of his faithfulness with the same blot in his translation. But the mind of the Holy Ghost in the words is plain and without parable, namely, that 'If the just man, who lives,'—that is, who at present enjoys the favour of God, and thereby is supported in all his trials,—and should live always, 'by his faith,' if he continues in it, as Paræus well glosseth, 'shall draw back,' or shall be withdrawn, namely, through fear or sloth (as the word properly signifieth, see Acts xx. 27), from his believing, 'my soul shall have no pleasure in him;' that is (according to the import of the Hebraism), 'my soul shall hate or abhor him to death;' as it is also expounded in the words immediately following, 'But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition, but,' etc. From hence, then, evident it is that such a man who is a just or righteous man, and under promise of living for ever by his faith (and therefore also a true and sound believer), may draw back, or be withdrawn, to the contracting of the hatred of God, and to destruction in the end. The forlorn hope of evading, because the sentence is hypothetical or conditional, not positive, hath been routed over and over, yea, and is abandoned by some of the great masters themselves of that cause unto the defence whereof it pretendeth. And, however, in this place, it would be most preposterous; for if it should be supposed that the just man, who is in a way and under a promise of living by his faith, were in no danger or possibility of drawing back, and that to the loss of the favour of God and ruin of his soul, God must be conceived to speak

here at no better rate of wisdom or understanding than this: 'The just shall live by his faith; but if he shall do that which is simply and utterly impossible for him to do, my soul shall have no pleasure in him.' What savour of wisdom, yea, or of common sense, is there in admonishing or cautioning men against such evils which there is no possibility for them to fall into, yea, and this known unto themselves? Therefore this testimony, for confirmation of the doctrine we maintain, is like a king upon his throne, against whom there is no rising up."

Ans. What small cause Mr Goodwin hath to quarrel with Beza or other translators, and with how little advantage to his cause this text is produced, shall out of hand be made appear:—

1. The words as they cry are, Ὁ δὲ δίκαιος ἐκ πίστεως ζήσεται· καὶ ἐὰν ὑποστείληται, οὐκ εὐδοκεῖ ἡ ψυχή μου ἐν αὐτῷ· ἡμεῖς δὲ οὐκ ἐσμὲν ὑποστολῆς εἰς ἀπώλειαν, ἀλλὰ πίστεως εἰς περιποίησιν ψυχῆς. In the foregoing part of the chapter, the apostle had treated of two sorts of persons:—(1.) Such as, to forsake the assemblies of the saints, withdrew from the church and ordinances of Christ, and so by degrees fell off with a total and everlasting backsliding. Of these the apostle speaks, describing their ways and end, from verse 25 unto verse 31. Thence forward (2.) he speaks to them and of them who abode, in their persecutions and under all their afflictions, to hold fast their confidence; which he also farther exhorts them to, that, by patient abiding in well-doing, they might receive the reward. Concerning both these, having told them of the unshaken kingdom of Christ that should be brought in, notwithstanding the apostasy of many, on whose iniquity God would take vengeance, he lays down that eminent promise of the gospel, "The just by faith shall live;" words often used to express the state and condition of believers,—of those who are truly and unfeignedly so. The Lord being faithful in his promise, "the justified person shall live," or obtain life everlasting. It is the promise of eternal life that is here given them, as that which they had not as yet received, but in patience they were to wait to receive, after they had done the whole will of God. That any of these should so "draw back" as that the Lord's "soul should have no pleasure in them," is directly contrary to the promise here made of their living. The particle καί in the next words is plainly adversative and exceptive, as it is very many times in the New Testament, and that as to the persons of whom he is speaking. At ζήσεται the period is full, the description of the state of the just by faith is completed; and in the next words the state of backsliders is entered upon, καὶ ἐὰν ὑποστείληται referring to them, whom by their apostasy and subduction of themselves from Christian assemblies he had before described. There is an ellipsis in the words, to be supplied by some indefinite term, to give them the sense intended. This Beza and our translators have done by that excepted against, causelessly, by Mr Goodwin; for

if a translator may make the text speak significantly in the language whereinto he translates it, the introduction of such supplements is allowed him.

2. The following expression puts it out of all question that this was the intendment of the apostle; for he expressly makes mention, and that in reference to what was spoken before, of two sorts of people, to whom his former expressions are respectively to be accommodated. The words are, ἡμεῖς δὲ οὐκ, κ.τ.λ., as above. Mr Goodwin, to make us believe that he took notice of these words, hath this passage of them, "As it is also expounded in the words immediately following, 'But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition, but,' etc." But what, I pray, is expounded in these words, "that drawers back shall be destroyed"? This is all he takes notice of in them. Evidently the words are an application of the former assertions unto several persons. There are, says he, some who are τῆς ὑποστολῆς, and some that are τῆς πίστεως. Those, saith he, who are τῆς ὑποστολῆς, they shall be destroyed; those who are τῆς πίστεως, they shall live;—evidently and beyond all contradiction assigning his former assertions of "The just shall live by faith," and "If any man draw back," to several persons, by a distribution of their lot and portions to them. In verse 38 he lays down in thesis the state and condition of believers and backsliders. In verse 39 he makes application of the position he laid down to himself and them: (1.) *Negatively*, that they were not of the former sort, "of them that draw back," etc.; (2.) *Positively*, that they were of the rest, of "them that believe." And those expressions, verse 39, Οὐκ ἐσμὲν ὑποστολῆς ἀλλὰ πίστεως, do undeniably affirm two sorts of persons in both places to be spoken of, and that ἐὰν ὑποστειληται can by no means be referred to our δίκαιος, which would intermix them whom the apostle, as to their present state and future condition, held out in a contradistinction one to the other unto the end. All that ensues in Mr Goodwin's discourse being built upon this sandy foundation, that it is the believer, of whom God affirms that he "shall live by faith," who is supposed to be τῆς ὑποστολῆς, contrary to the express assertion of the apostle, it needs no farther consideration, although he is not able to manifest any strength in conclusion drawn from suppositions of events which may be possible in one sense and in another impossible.

But before we pass farther, may not this witness, which Mr Goodwin hath attempted in vain to suborn to appear and speak in his cause, be demanded what he can speak, or what he knows of the truth of that which he is produced to oppose? This, then, it confesseth and denieth not, at first word, that of professors there are two sorts: some are ὑποστολῆς, of such as do or may "draw back unto perdition;" some πίστεως, which "believe to the saving of the soul," and that in opposition to the others. Also, that those who withdraw

are not πίστεως, not true believers, nor ever were, notwithstanding all their profession, and what[ever] their gifts and attainments in and under their profession. So that the testimony produced keepeth still its place, and is "as a king upon his throne, against whom there is no rising up," but yet speaks quite contrary, clearly, evidently, distinctly, to what is pretended. Both on the one hand and the other is our thesis undeniably confirmed in this place of the apostle: If all those who fall away to perdition were never truly or really of the faith, then those who are of the faith cannot fall away; but they who fall away to perdition were never truly or really of the faith, or true believers: *ergo*. The reason of the consequent of the first proposition is evident; for their not being of the faith is plainly included as the reason of their apostasy, and their being of the faith intimated as that which would have preserved them from such defection. The minor is the apostle's, 'We are not ὑποστολῆς, of them that draw back, but of them that believe;' which plainly distinguisheth them that draw back from believers. Again: if true believers shall live, and continue to the saving of their souls, in opposition to them that fall away to perdition, then they shall certainly persevere in their faith, for these two are but one and the same; but that true believers shall live, and believe to the saving of their souls, in opposition to them that draw back, or subduct themselves, to perdition, is the assertion of the Holy Ghost: *ergo*. I presume by this time Mr G. is plainly convinced that indeed he had as good (yea, and much better, for the advantage of his cause in hand) have let his witness have abode in quietness, and not entreated him so severely [as] to [make him] denounce judgment against that doctrine which he seeks by him to confirm.

Sect. 32. The parable of the stony ground, Matt. xiii. 20, 21, comes next for consideration. The words chosen to be insisted on are in the verses mentioned, "But he that received the seed into stony places, the same is he that heareth the word, and anon with joy receiveth it: yet hath he not root in himself, but dureth for a while," etc. That by the stony ground is meant true believers is that which Mr Goodwin undertakes to prove; but how, in his whole discourse, I profess I perceive not. I must take leave to profess that I cannot find any thing looking like a proof or argument to evince it, from the beginning to the end of this discourse, though something be offered to take off the arguments that are used to prove it to be otherwise. Doth Mr Goodwin think that men will easily believe that faith which hath neither root, fruit, nor continuance, to be true and saving faith? Doubtless, they must have very low apprehensions of saving faith, union with Christ, justification, sanctification, adoption, etc., wherewith it is attended, who can once entertain any such imagination. That which is tendered to induce us to such a persuasion may briefly be considered.

Saith he, sect 32, "Now, those signified by the stony ground he expressly calleth προσκαίρους, that is, persons who continue for a time or a season,—that is (as Luke explaineth), οἱ πρὸς καιρὸν πιστεύουσι, who "believe for a season:" so that those who only for a time believe, and afterward make defection from Christ and from the gospel, are nevertheless numbered and ranked by him amongst believers. The words in Luke are very particular: 'They on the rock are they, which, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no root, which for a while believe, and in time of temptation fall away;'—from whence it appears that the hearers here described are not compared to the rock or stony ground for the hardness of their hearts, forasmuch as they are said to "receive the word with joy," which argues an ingenuity and teachableness of spirit in them, and is elsewhere (namely, Acts ii. 41) taken knowledge of by the Holy Ghost as an index or sign of a true believer; but for such a property, disposition, or temper as this, namely, not to give or afford the word so received a radication in their hearts and souls, so intimous, serious, and solid, which should be sufficient to maintain their belief of it, and good affections to it, against all such occurrences in the world which may oppose or attempt either the one or the other."

Ans. 1. The first reason intimated is, "That they are said to be πρόσκαιροι," a term given them, plainly, to distinguish them from true believers,—men that make a profession for a season, expressly opposed to them who receive the word "in honest and good hearts." If the word had denoted any excellency, any thing that was good in them, then there had been some pretence to have insisted on it to prove them true believers; but to demonstrate the truth of their faith from their hypocrisy, and their excellencies from that which expressly denotes their unworthiness, is a strange way of arguing. "They are persons," saith our Saviour, "that make profession for a little while, and then decay; not like them who receive the word in honest and good hearts:" "Therefore," saith Mr Goodwin, "they are true believers." But,—

2. "In Luke they are said to 'believe for a season.'" Mr Goodwin is not now to learn how often in the Scripture they are said to believe who only profess the faith of the gospel, though the root of the matter be not in them. That of John ii. 23–25 may suffice for undeniable instance, or John vi. 66 may farther expound it. Their believing for a season is but the lifeless, worthless, fruitless profession for a season, as their distinction from the good ground doth manifest. But,—

3. "They are said to 'receive the word with joy,' which argues ingenuity and teachableness of spirit in them." No more than in Herod, who "heard the word gladly;" or in the Jews, when the preaching of Ezekiel was "pleasant" or desirable to them; or in those de-

scribed Isa. lviii. 2, who "sought God daily, and delighted to know his ways," in the midst of their abominable practices.

From the similitude itself he yet farther attempts this uncouth assertion: —

"But as the blade which springs from one and the same kind of seed, as suppose from wheat or any other grain, though sown in different, yea, or, contrary soils, is yet of the same species or kind, the nature of the soil not changing the specifical nature of the seed that is sown in it, and God giving to every seed its own body, of what temper soever the ground is, where it is sown; in like manner, that faith which springs from the same seed of the gospel must needs be of one and the same nature and kind, though this seed be sown in the hearts of never so differing a constitution and frame, the temper of the heart, be it what it will be, not being able specifically to alter either the gospel or the natural fruit issuing from it. And as a blade or ear of wheat, though it be blasted before the harvest, is not hereby proved not to have been a true blade or ear of wheat before it was blasted; in like manner, the withering or decay of any man's faith, by what means or occasion soever, before his death, doth not prove it to have been a false, counterfeit, or hypocritical faith, or a faith of any other kind than that which is true, real, and permanent unto the end."

Ans. It hath been formerly observed, that similitudes are not argumentative beyond the extent of that particular wherein their nature as such doth consist. The intendment of Christ, in this parable, is to manifest that many hear the word in vain, and bring forth no fruit of it at all. Of these, one sort is compared to stony ground, that brings forth a blade, but no fruit. No fruit is no fruit, though there be a blade or no blade. The difference between the one's receiving of seed and the other's, manifested by our Saviour in this parable, is in this, that one brings forth fruit, and the other doth not. Farther; the seed of wheat, or the like, brings forth its fruit in a natural way, and therefore whatever it brings forth follows in some measure the nature of the seed; but the seed of the gospel brings forth its fruit in a moral way, and therefore may have effects of sundry natures. That which the seed of wheat brings forth is wheat; but that which the gospel brings forth is not gospel, but faith. Besides; what the wheat brings forth, if it come not, nor ever will, to be wheat in the ear, is but grass, and not of the same nature and kind with that which is wheat actually; though virtually and originally there be the nature of wheat in the root, yet *actually* wheat is not in the blade, that hath not, nor ever will have, ear. If the seed of wheat be so corrupted in the soil where it is sown that it cannot bring forth fruit, that which it doth bring forth, whatever it be, is of a different nature from that which is brought forth to perfection by the seed of wheat in good ground. Again;

faith is brought forth by the seed of the gospel, when the promises and exhortations of the gospel, being preached unto men, do prevail on them to give assent unto the truth of it. That every such effect wrought is true, justifying faith, giving union with Jesus Christ, Mr Goodwin cannot prove. That effects specifically different may be brought forth by the same seed of the gospel, seeing "to some it is a savour of life unto life, and to some a savour of death unto death," needs not much proving. Some receive the word, and turn it into wantonness; some are cast into the mould of it, and are translated into the same image,—if "the temper of the heart," as is said, is "not able specifically to alter the gospel." But that there may not fruit of various kinds be borne in the heart that assents to it, that receives it in the upper crust and skin of it, is the question. Neither is it a blade occasionally, withering before the harvest, but a slight receiving of the seed, so as that it can never bring forth fruit, that is intimated. In sum, this whole discourse is a great piece of sophistry, in comparing *natural* and *moral* causes in the producing of their effects; a thing not intended in the parable, and whereabout he that will busy himself "jungat vulpes et mulgeat hircos." This is that which our Saviour teacheth us in the similitude of seed sown in the stony ground: The word is preached unto some men, who are affected with it for a season, assent unto it, but not coming up to a cordial close with it, after a while wither away. And such as these, we say, were never true believers. A small matter will serve to make a man a true believer, if these are such. What tendency this doctrine may have to lull men asleep in security, when Christ is not in them of a truth, may easily appear and be judged. If men who are distinguished from other believers by such signal differences as these here are, may yet pass for true believers, justified, sanctified, adopted ones, "solvi[te] mortales curas,"—the way to heaven is laid open to thousands, who, I fear, will never come to the end of the journey.

What remains of Mr Goodwin's discourse on this text is spent in answering some objections which are made against his interpretation of the place. It grows now late, and this task grows so heavy on my hand that I cannot satisfy myself in the repetition of any thing spoken before or delivered, which would necessarily enforce a particular consideration of what Mr Goodwin here insists on. Let him at his leisure answer this one argument, and I shall trouble him no farther in this matter:—

That faith which hath neither root nor fruit, neither sound heart nor good life, that by-and-by readily and easily yields, upon temptation, to a total defection, is not true, saving, justifying faith. The root of faith, taken spiritually, is the habit of it in the heart,—a spiritual, living habit; which if it reside not in the heart, all assent whatever wants the nature of faith, true and saving. The fruits of

faith are, good works and new obedience. That faith which hath not works, James tells you, is dead. Dead and living faith, doubtless, differ specifically. Again, faith purifieth the heart; and when a heart is wholly polluted, corrupted, naught, and false, there dwells no faith in that heart; it is impossible it should be in a heart, and not at least radically and fundamentally purify it. Farther, Mr Goodwin hath told us that true believers are so fortified against apostasy, that they are in only a possibility, in no probability or great danger, of total apostasy; and therefore they who presently and readily fall away cannot be of those who are scarce in any danger of so doing, upon any account whatever;—but that the faith here mentioned hath neither root nor fruit, good heart to dwell in nor good life attending it, but instantly, upon trial and temptation, vanisheth to nothing, we are taught in the text itself: therefore the faith here mentioned is not true or saving faith. That it hath "no root" is expressly affirmed, verse 21. And all the rest of the qualities mentioned are evidenced from the opposition wherein they who are *these believers* are set unto true believers. They receive the word in "honest and good hearts," they "bring forth fruit with patience," they "endure in time of trial," like the house built on the rock, when the house built on the sand falls to the ground.

One word more with this witness before we part. They who receive the word in honest and good hearts, keep it, do bring forth fruit with patience, and fall not away under temptation (so saith the testimony); but all true believers receive the word in honest and good hearts: *ergo*;—which is the voice of Mr Goodwin's fourth witness in this cause.

Then 2 Pet. ii. 18–22 is forced to bring up the rear of the testimonies by Mr Goodwin produced to convince the world of the truth and righteousness of his doctrine of the saints' apostasy, ending his whole discourse in the mire. Observations from the text or context, from the words themselves, or the coherence, to educe his conclusion from, he insists not on. Many excellent words, concerning the clearness and evidence of this testimony, and the impossibility of avoiding what hence he concludes, we want not; but we have been too often inured to such a way of proceeding to be now moved at it or troubled about it. Were the waters deep, they would not make such a noise. The state and condition of the men here described by the apostle is so justly delineated to the eye by the practice of men in the world to whom the gospel is preached, that I do not a little wonder how any man exercised in the ministry should once surmise that they are true believers of whom he here treats. Taking the words in the sense wherein they are commonly received, and in their utmost extent, who sees them not daily exemplified in and upon them who are yet far enough from the "faith of God's elect"? By the

dispensation of the word, especially when managed by a skilful "master of assemblies," men are every day so brought under the power of their convictions and of the light communicated to them, as to acknowledge the truth and power of the word, and, in obedience thereunto, to leave off, avoid, and abhor, the ways and courses wherein the men of the world, either not hearing the word at all, or not so wrought upon by it, do pollute themselves and wallow in all manner of sensuality; and yet are not changed in their nature, so as to become new creatures, but continue indeed and in the sight of God "dogs and swine," oftentimes returning to their "vomit and mire," though some of them hold out in their profession to the end. And these are they whom, commonly, our divines have deciphered under the name of "formalists," having a "form of godliness, but denying the power of it," who are here all at once by Mr Goodwin interested in Christ and the "inheritance of the saints in light." To make good his enterprise, he argues from the Remonstrants, sect. 40, p. 297:—

"1. If the said expressions import nothing but what hypocrites, and that 'in sensu composito,' that is, whilst hypocrites, are capable of, then may those be hypocrites who are separated from men that live in error, and from the pollutions of the world, and that through the knowledge of Jesus Christ; and, on the other hand, those may be saints and sound believers who wallow in all manner of filthiness, and defile themselves daily with the pollutions of the world. This consequence, according to the principles and known tenets of our adversaries, is legitimate and true, inasmuch as they hold 'That true believers may fall so foul and so far that the church, according to Christ's institution, may be constrained to testify that they cannot bear them in their outward communion, and that they shall have no part in the kingdom of Christ, except they repent,' etc. But whether this be wholesome and sound divinity or no, to teach that they who are separate from sinners, and live holily and blamelessly in this present world, and this by means of the knowledge of Jesus Christ, may be hypocrites and children of perdition, and they, on the other hand, who are companions of thieves, murderers, adulterers, etc., saints and sound believers, I leave to men whose judgments are not turned upside down with prejudice to determine."

Sundry things might be observed from the text to render this discourse altogether useless as to the end for which it is produced: as, 1. That sundry copies, verse 18, instead of ὅλως[1] read ὀλίγου,—

[1] "Ολως seems to be a misprint for ὄντως, which is the reading of the *textus receptus*. This latter reading is now abandoned in the critical editions of the New Testament. Estius seems to have adopted ὀλίγον. Bloomfield has no doubt that it should be ὀλίγῳ. Tischendorf, on the authority of some of the most ancient manuscripts, several ancient versions, and several of the Fathers, inserts ὀλίγως in the text as the proper reading. The meaning in this case would be "almost." In the translation of De Wette, "beinahe," "almost," is the word employed.—Ed.

who "almost," or in a little way or measure, so escaped as is said. 2. That it is not said that those who are so escaped may apostatize. It is said, indeed, that the false prophets and teachers δελεάζουσιν, do lay baits for them, as the fisher doth for the fish that he would take, by proposing unto them a liberty as to all manner of impurity and uncleanness; but that in so doing they prevail over them is not affirmed. 3. The conditional expression, verse 20, may be used in reference to the false prophets, and not to them that are said to "escape the pollutions of the world;" and if to them, that nothing can be argued from thence hath plentifully, upon several occasions, been already demonstrated. But, to suffer Mr G. to leap over all these blots in his entrance, and to take the words in his own sense and connection, I say,—

1. In what large and improper sense such persons as we treat of are termed "hypocrites" hath been declared. Those who pretend to be God-ward, what they know themselves not to be, making a pretence of religion to colour and countenance themselves in vice and vicious practices or sensual courses, wherein they allow and bless themselves, we intend not; but such as in some sincerity, under the enjoyment and improvement of gifts and privileges, do or may walk conscientiously (as Paul before his conversion), and yet are not united to Christ.

2. Of these we say that they may so "escape," etc. But that *sound believers* may "wallow in all manner of filthiness, and defile themselves with all manner of pollutions," we say not; nor will any instance given amount to the height and intendment of these expressions, they being all alleviated by sundry considerations necessary to be taken in with that of their sinning.

3. If we may compare the worst of a saint with the best of a formal professor, and make an estimate of the states and conditions of them both, we may cast the balance on the wrong side.

4. We do say that Simon Peter was a believer when he denied Christ, and Simon Magus a hypocrite and in the "bond of iniquity" when it was said he "believed." We do say that a man may be alive notwithstanding many wounds and much filth upon him, and a man may be dead without either the one or the other, in that eminently visible manner. He adds,—

"2. The persons here spoken of are said to have ὄντως, truly and really, 'escaped from them who live in error.' Doubtless a hypocrite cannot be said truly or really, but in show or appearance at most, to have made such an escape (I mean from men who live in error), considering that, for matter of reality and truth, remaining in hypocrisy, he lives in one of the greatest and foulest errors that is."

The whole force of this second exception lies upon the ambiguity of the term "hypocrite." Though such as pretend religion and the

worship of God, to be a colour and pretext for the free and uncontrolled practising of vile abominations, may not be said so to escape it, yet such as those we have before described, with their convictions, light, gifts, duties, good conscience, etc., may truly and really escape from them and their ways who polute themselves with the errors of idolatry, false worship, superstition, and the pollutions of practices against the light of nature and their own convictions. It is added that,—

"3. A hypocrite, whose foot is already in the snare of death, cannot upon any tolerable account, either of reason or common sense, be said to be 'allured' (that is, by allurements to be deceived) or 'overcome by the pollutions of the world,' no more than a fish that is already in the net or fast upon the hook can be said to be allured or deceived by a bait held to her."

Ans. But he that hath been so far prevailed upon by the preaching of the word as to relinquish and renounce the practices of uncleanness, wherein he some time wallowed and rolled himself, may be prevailed upon and overcome by temptations to backslide into the same abominable practices wherein he was formerly engaged, deserting that way and course of attending to the word and yielding obedience thereunto which he had entertained, that in its own nature tended to a better end. Says he,—

"4. Hypocrites are nowhere said, neither can they with any congruity to Scripture phrase be said, to have 'escaped the pollutions of the world through the acknowledgment' (for so the word ἐπίγνωσις should be translated) 'of Jesus Christ;' the acknowledgment of the truth, and so of Christ and of God, constantly in the Scriptures importing a sound and saving work of conversion, as we lately observed in this chapter, sect. 20."

Ans. It sufficeth that the thing itself intimated is sufficiently revealed in the Scriptures, and confirmed by the examples of all those who have acknowledged the truth of the word to the putting on of a form of godliness, though they come not up to the power or saving practice of it. And truly I cannot admit that any one who hath had never so little experience in the work of the ministry, or made never so little observation of religion, should once suppose that all such persons must needs be accounted true believers, regenerate, etc.

Mr Goodwin shuts up this chapter with a declaration concerning the uselessness of *cautions* and *admonitions* given to believers about backsliding, upon a supposition of an infallible promise of God for their perseverance. I presume the reader is weary as well as myself; and having in the last chapter heard him out to the full [as to] what he is able to say to this common-place of opposition to the doctrine we have thus far asserted, and offered those considerations of the ways

of God's dealings with believers to preserve them in the course of their obedience and walking with him which, I hope, through the mercy and goodness of God, may be satisfactory to them that shall weigh them, I shall not burden him with the repetition of any thing already delivered, nor do judge it needful for to add any thing more.

END OF VOL. VIII.

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